The Sacraments Explained

BY

JOSEPH J. BAIERL, S.T.D.

213.54

"The Lord ruleth me: and I shall want nothing. He hath set me in a place of pasture. He hath brought me up, on the water of refreshment: He hath converted my soul....Thou hast prepared a table before me....Thou hast anointed my head with oil; and my chalice which inebriateth *me*, how goodly it is!" (Ps. XXII, ls.)

THE SACRAMENTS EXPLAINED

ACCORDING TO THE MUNICH
OR PSYCHOLOGICAL METHOD

WITHDRAWN

FOR CHILDREN OF THE
INTERMEDIATE AND HIGHER GRADES

BASED ON THE BALTIMORE
CATECHISM (No. 2)

AN AID TO CATECHISTS

Third Impression

BY
REV. JOSEPH J. BAIERL, S. T. D.

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PREFACE

The purpose of this volume is to offer to catechists some practical aids, to enable them to train children of the intermediate and higher grades of our primary schools to appreciate better the wondrous sacramental life of the Church. These instructions, based on the Baltimore Catechism (No. 2) and supplemented by Deharbe's Catechism, are an adaptation of Dr. H. Stieglitz's splendid work, *"Ausgeführte Katechesen über die katholische Gnadenlehre"* I. Teil (in part) u. II. Teil (Jos. Kösel'sche Buchandlung, Kempten & Munich, 1908). They are arranged, therefore, according to the so-called Munich or Psychological Method, which the reader will find amply expounded in the Preface to our volume *"The Creed Explained."*

We have developed the instructions on Penance and the Holy Eucharist more fully than is usually done. However, the importance of these two Sacraments for the child's spiritual life ought to be a sufficient justification for a thorough treatment of these indispensable means of grace. In this connection the catechist may find it helpful to employ the leaflet entitled *"A Method of Confession and Communion,"* which we have published under separate cover. The Catholic doctrine on the Holy Eucharist as a Sacrifice is specially treated in our booklet *"The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass."*

These instructions are meant to be "aids"; consequently they are not to be taken literally. After all the chief factor in catechization, under grace, is the catechist himself. He is the living intermediary between the printed text and the child's soul. It is his peculiar function to adapt the dead letter to the vital needs of his audience. Urged on by the kind words of many teachers, who have successfully employed our volumes

on the Creed, the Commandments and Holy Mass, we have been encouraged to explain the Sacraments in accordance with the principles of the Munich or Psychological Method.

We add a brief *Bibliography* of useful works for the catechist. Pohle-Preuss: *The Sacraments,* vols. I-IV (B. Herder Book Co.; St. Louis, Mo.; 1915-1917); A. Devine: *The Sacraments Explained* (R. & T. Washbourne, London, 1905); *Exposition of Christian Doctrine,* Part III, by a Seminary Professor (John McVey, Philadelphia, 1920); *Catechism of the Council of Trent,* trans. into English by the Rev. J. Donovan, D. D.; (Jas. Duffy, Dublin); Bernard J. Otten, S. J.: *The Sacramental Life of the Church* (B. Herder Book Co.; St. Louis, Mo.; 1907); F. Spirago & R. Clarke, S. J.: *The Catechism Explained* (Benziger Bros., N. Y.); Thos. L. Kinkead: *An Explanation of the Baltimore Catechism* (Benziger Bros., N. Y.); A. A. Lambing: *The Sacramentals of the Holy Catholic Church* (Benziger Bros., N. Y.); F. Spirago & J. Baxter: *Anecdotes and Examples Illustrating the Catholic Catechism* (Benziger Bros., N. Y.); P. Power: *Catechism, Doctrinal, Moral, Historical, Liturgical,* vol. III (Jas. Duffy & Co., Dublin); W. Faerber & F. Girardy, C. SS. R.: *Commentary on the Catechism* (B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, Mo., 1906); Geo. Howe: *The Catechist,* vol. II (R. & T. Washbourne, London, 1898); D. Chisholm: *The Catechism in Examples,* vol. IV (R. & T. Washbourne, London, 1908); *The Catholic Encyclopedia, passim;* Dr. A. Weber: *Ausgeführte Katechesen über das dritte Hauptstück für das 5. Schuljahr* (Jos. Kösel'sche Buchhandlung, Kempten & Munich, 1904); C. Muff, O. S. B.: *Katechesen für die vier obern Klassen der Primarschule* (Benziger Bros., N. Y., 1910); Dr. J. Schmitt: *Erklärungen des mittleren Deharbschen Katechismus* (10'ed. B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, Mo.); Dr. R. Baumeister: *Katechesen über den mittleren Katechismus* (B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, Mo., 1904); P. Jos. Deharbe's *grössere Kate-*

chismuserklärung, neubearbeitet von Jacob Linden, S. J. (Ferdinand Schöningh, Paderborn, 1912); L. Mehler: *Beispiele* (10'ed. G. Manz, Ratisbon); *Katechetische Blätter, passim.*

The catechist will find the following publications of catechetical pictures in colors very helpful: Ph. Schumacher: *Religiöse Wandbilder;* Swoboda: *Liturgische Wandtafeln; Grand Catechisme En Images,* (Maison de la Bonne Presse, Paris.)

For the honor of the greatest Catechist — Jesus Christ!

THE AUTHOR.

Feast of the Most Precious Blood, 1921.
Rochester, N. Y.

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I.
BAPTISM

LESSON I.

Baptism—Regeneration

Catechetical Unit:

1) What is Baptism? (Deharbe)
2) What is Baptism of water? L. XIV, Q. 158.
3) Why is Baptism the first Sacrament? (Deharbe)
4) Is Baptism necessary to salvation? L. XIV, Q. 154.
5) When did Christ give the commandment to baptize? (Deharbe)

(N. B.—The supplementary questions and answers in this and the following lessons are taken from *"A Full Catechism of the Catholic Religion"* of Rev. Jos. Deharbe, S. J., revised, enlarged and edited by the Rt. Rev. P. N. Lynch, D. D., Swartz, Kirwin & Fauss, New York.)

Preparation. Dear children, you all are Christians. But you were not always Christians; once you were heathens. You all are children of the Church. But you were not always children of the Church; once you were outside of the Church. You all are children of God; once you were children of the devil. You are heirs of Heaven. But you were not always heirs of Heaven; once Hell was open for you. Since when are you Christians and children of the Church, children of God and heirs of Heaven? In Holy Baptism you received this happiness and this great grace. On that occasion you obtained a precious heavenly gift—sanctifying grace.

You already know: What is sanctifying grace? Why is sanctifying grace called a "gratuitous or free" gift? When does the sinner receive sanctifying grace? How long does sanctifying grace remain in the soul? Today and in the following lessons we are going to learn about Holy Baptism.

Aim. First I shall show you: *How necessary Baptism is for Heaven.* Jesus Himself showed us that very clearly. You know the story of Nicodemus.

Presentation. Once Jesus came to Jerusalem for the feast of the Pasch. He taught in the temple and confirmed His teaching by miracles. Hence many believed in His divine words.

Among these was also Nicodemus, a distinguished counsellor of the Jews. But Nicodemus was a timid man. For fear of the Jews he did not venture to speak to Jesus openly and in the day time. Therefore he came to Christ secretly at night, in order to be converted. He spoke as follows: "Rabbi (that is, Master), we know that Thou art come a teacher from God; for no man can do these signs which Thou dost, unless God be with him." Jesus replied: "Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus did not understand Him and asked: "But Master, how can a man be born, when he is old?" Jesus explained to him more clearly what He meant, saying: "Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Nicodemus asked in astonishment: "How can these things be done?" Jesus answered and said to him: "Art thou a master in Israel and knowest not these things?" Then He pointed to His death on the cross, and said: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting. For God so loved the world, as to give His only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in Him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting. For God sent not His Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world may be saved by Him." (John iii). *(Show the pupils a large picture of this scene.)*

Explanation. 1. Nicodemus came secretly to the Divine Master. What purpose led him to Jesus? It did not happen out of curiosity, but rather from a desire for salvation; he wanted to find the way to Heaven. Jesus taught him, saying: "Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of Heaven." But Nicodemus misunderstood that entirely;! he was thinking of a bodily birth. Therefore he asked in wonder: "How can a man be born, when he is old?" Of course, that is impossible. You all know what the Saviour was speaking about. Jesus meant a spiritual birth of water and the Holy Ghost. This second birth, or rebirth (regeneration), takes place in Baptism. At his bodily birth man receives natural life, at his spiritual rebirth he receives supernatural life, or the life of sanctifying grace. At his bodily birth man is born for this earthly life, at his spiritual rebirth he is born for eternal life. At his earthly birth man becomes a child of man, at his rebirth he is made a child of God. Remember, then: *Baptism is a Sacrament in which man is born again by water and the Holy Ghost to life everlasting. (Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis).* For short you can say: Baptism is the Sacrament of rebirth (regeneration).

2. This Sacrament of rebirth to eternal life is given by pouring water on the head of the person to be baptized, and saying at the same time: I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Therefore, we call this Sacrament the Baptism of water. Our Catechism says: **Baptism of water is that which is given by pouring water on the head of the person to be baptized, and saying at the same time: I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard).* The day of your Baptism, therefore, is the day of your birth (regeneration) for the kingdom of God and Heaven.

3. Now, let us look at the words of the Lord a little

more closely. Twice Jesus said: "Unless a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." When Jesus speaks of the kingdom of Heaven, He means the kingdom of God on earth—the Church. Therefore, the Saviour means to say: If you wish to enter into my Church, you must first be reborn in Holy Baptism. The person who is baptized becomes a child of the Church; he belongs to the great and holy family of Christians. Whoever is not a child of the Church, will not receive any of the graces of the Church, especially of the Holy Sacraments. Here it is just like in a school. You all are children of our school. Therefore you may also take part in the instructions. A strange child, that does not belong to our school, may not come here and may not learn with you. First Baptism, and then a person may also validly receive the other Sacraments. Before Baptism every other Sacrament—for instance, Penance—would be without effect. *Baptism is the first Sacrament, because before Baptism no other Sacrament can be validly received. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

4. "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." In these words is contained a second important truth. The Saviour means not only His kingdom on earth—the Church—but most of all the real kingdom of Heaven. Therefore Christ says very definitely: without Baptism there is no kingdom of Heaven! The Sacrament of the altar is indeed greater and holier than Baptism, because Jesus Himself is present in that Sacrament; but it is not as necessary as Baptism. Many have already entered into Heaven without Holy Communion; but no one enters into Heaven without Baptism. **Baptism is necessary to salvation, because without it we cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* St. Peter teaches the same truth. On Pentecost he preached his first sermon in such an impressive manner that the hearts of all were deeply moved. Then

the Jews asked: "What shall we do, men and brethren?" Peter replied: "Do penance and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins" (Acts of Ap. ii). Do you hear? Baptism is the first necessary thing. Without a ship one cannot ride over the ocean; and without Baptism one cannot enter into Heaven. Therefore a holy teacher of the Church (St. Basil) once said: "Baptism is the ship to Heaven."

5. Now, surely you would also like to know: When did Christ institute Baptism? We do not know that with full certainty. Most men think that Jesus instituted Baptism at His own Baptism in the Jordan river. That is very probable. At any rate, it had already been instituted, when the Saviour instructed Nicodemus about rebirth (regeneration). But this much we do know with certainty, namely, that Baptism is from Christ Himself: For, before Jesus went home to His Father in Heaven, He gave to His Apostles His last solemn command: "All power is given to Me in Heaven and in earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. xxviii, 18s). These are important words and all of you ought to impress them deeply on your memories. *Christ gave the commandment to baptize before His Ascension, when He said to his Apostles: Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. (Repeat together; use the blackboard).*

Write on the blackboard:

1. Baptism—Sacrament of rebirth (regeneration) —Baptism of water (2).
3. Before Baptism—no other Sacrament.
4. Without Baptism—no kingdom of Heaven.
5. Baptism—from Christ—"Going, therefore."

Synthesis. Christ has given us seven Sacraments. The first and most necessary Sacrament is Baptism. Christ Himself teaches us that; in what words? What

does Peter demand in his sermon on Pentecost? Why is Baptism the first Sacrament? Why is it the most necessary Sacrament? What is Baptism? Why is it called the Sacrament of rebirth or regeneration? What is Baptism of water? When did Christ give the commandment to baptize? *(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class).*

Application. 1. Baptism is the Sacrament of rebirth or regeneration. Many Christians celebrate their birthday. However, we have no reason for doing that. Our birthday is rather a day of mourning. Why? Were we not all poor heathen children? And we ought to rejoice over that? But we ought to celebrate the day of our Baptism with joy; indeed, we have every reason for doing that. Why? We were born again as children of God for Heaven.

2. Baptism is the first Sacrament. A Jewish boy sees Christian children going to Holy Confession. He, too, would like to get rid of his sins, and so he goes to Confession. The priest gives absolution. What do you say to that?—A heathen child slips in among Christian children who are about to be confirmed and allows itself to be confirmed by the Bishop. Later on that child becomes a Christian and is baptized. May it receive Holy Confirmation again?—A little Christian girl, five years of age, saw people going to Holy Communion. She thought that she, too, might go forward and, really, she received Holy Communion. What do you think of that?

3. Baptism is the most necessary Sacrament. But then what happens to the poor heathen children? Do they go to Heaven? "Nothing defiled can enter into the kingdom of Heaven." But surely, these children are not to blame for having original sin. That is indeed true. But God does not owe Heaven to us; that is also true. Moreover, such children will not be punished either; they will not go to Hell; neither will they go to Purgatory. There is a special place for them

where they do not have to suffer anything and yet have much joy. They are perfectly happy, possibly like our first parents in Paradise. Of course, they may not and cannot see God face to face. But that does not pain them, for they do not know how beautiful it is in Heaven.

4. If Baptism is so necessary, is it permissible to wait long before administering Baptism? It is a matter of conscience to have children baptized as soon as possible. How easily might not the poor child die. Then the mother would have to reproach herself: I am to blame that my child cannot enter into Heaven. That would be a grievous sin.

5. But what happens to adults who die without Baptism? Are they all lost? That depends: Whoever is without guilt can be saved; but whoever is himself to blame, will be lost. There are still about a billion people without Baptism. Pray for these poor creatures that the light of God's grace may shine upon them and lead them to Holy Baptism, so that some day eternal light may shine upon them.

LESSON II.

Baptismal Act—Baptismal Graces

Catechetical Unit:

1) How is Baptism given? L. XIV, Q. 156.
2) Are actual sins ever remitted by Baptism? L. XIV, Q. 153.
3) What is Baptism? L. XIV, Q. 152.
4) Why can we not receive Baptism more than once? L. XIII, Q. 149.
5) What is the character which Baptism imprints in the soul? L. XIII, Q. 150.
6) Does this character remain in the soul even after death? L. XIII, Q. 151.

Preparation. Dear children, a holy doctor of the Church (Gregory Nazianzenus) says: "Christ allowed

Himself to be baptized in the Jordan, in order to sanctify the water and to give it the power of sanctifying." Clearly he means to point to the institution of Baptism. Let us review what we already know about it. *(Question the pupils briefly on the preceding lesson.)*

Formerly there were two great days of Baptism: Holy Saturday and Pentecost Saturday. Now it is still customary on these two days to solemnly consecrate the baptismal water. During the consecration the priest submerges the Easter candle, the symbol of the risen Saviour, three times in turn in the water and prays and sings: "May the power of the Holy Ghost descend into this fountain of water." Then this baptismal water is preserved throughout the entire year in the baptismal font, and the priest uses it at solemn Baptism. Let us learn about that today.

Aim. We wish to answer two questions about Baptism: (1) *How is Baptism given?* (2) *What are the effects of Baptism?* What happens exteriorly on the body at Baptism? What takes place interiorly in the soul?

Who of you has already seen Baptism administered? What do you remember of that?—Now I am going to tell you the chief thing that occurs at Baptism. The beautiful and significant ceremonies of Holy Baptism I am going to describe and explain for you later on in a special instruction.

Presentation. When Christian parents receive a child from God, they bring it as quickly as possible to the church for Holy Baptism. The priest receives the child to be baptized at the church door and leads it to the baptismal font. At the same time he says: "Enter into the temple of God, that thou mayest share with Christ unto eternal life"! The wicked enemy still has power over the child. Therefore the child to be baptized must solemnly renounce the devil. The priest asks: "Joseph or Mary, dost thou renounce Satan? and all his works? and all his pomps?" Each

time the sponsor answers for the child: "I do renounce." The child is to belong to Christ. Consequently it must also profess its Faith in Christ. Then the priest asks: "Joseph, wilt thou be baptized?"—"I will." Now the moment of Baptism is come.

The priest takes the little vessel with baptismal water and pours the water three times in the form of a cross over the head of the person to be baptized and says at the same time: "Joseph, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." At this moment something happens similar to what took place at the Baptism of Jesus. The heavens open and the Holy Ghost descends—of course not visibly, but rather invisibly—and purifies the soul of the child and sanctifies the soul. But the heavenly Father says to His angels: "Behold, that is now My beloved child in whom I am well pleased"! Then there is great joy in Heaven.—What has taken place interiorly in the soul, is now also expressed exteriorly: the priest lays a white garment upon the child and says at the same time these beautiful words: "Receive this white garment, which mayest thou bring unspotted before the judgment-seat of our Lord Jesus Christ, that thou mayest have life everlasting." Then he dismisses the child that has been baptized with the salutation: "Joseph, go in peace and may the Lord be with thee." But father and mother now love that child more, for it is a child of God. *(Show the pupils a large picture of Baptism).*

Explanation. 1. When the priest baptizes, he uses a special kind of water—*baptismal water.* The Church has prescribed that. But in case of necessity one would be permitted to use simple Holy-Water, yes, even natural water. Ever since the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan river, all natural water has received the power and consecration for Holy Baptism. Just a short while ago we heard that from a holy doctor of the Church: "Christ allowed Himself to be baptized to consecrate the water."—While Peter was in prison at

Rome, the jailer was converted. Suddenly a wonderful fountain gushed forth from the ground. The Apostle took some of that water and baptized the new convert. That was ordinary, natural water, and still it was proper as baptismal water.

Now how must one pour the baptismal water?—It must be poured three times, and that in the form of a cross. A single pouring of water would indeed be sufficient; but the Church demands a threefold pouring when the priest baptizes. The water ought to be poured over the head in such a manner, that not only the hair, but the skin is moistened, or washed; otherwise the Baptism is invalid. In the old days it was generally the custom to administer Baptism in a different manner. In those days there was a special chapel (baptistry) in the church for Baptism. In it there was a large basin, or tank. The person to be baptized had to descend into this basin, and he was immersed (dipped) three times beneath the water, while the priest recited the words of Baptism.

2. What *words* must the person speak, who administers Baptism? First comes the name of the person to be baptized: "Joseph, or Mary." "I baptize thee in the name of the Father"—at the same time the water is poured over the head for the first time—"and of the Son"—at the same time the water is poured for the second time—"and of the Holy Ghost"—at the same time the water is poured for the third time. The words of Baptism must be spoken precisely in this way. For what Christ has ordered, man may not change. Therefore, how is Baptism given?—**Whoever baptizes should pour water on the head of the person to be baptized, and say, while pouring the water: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost".** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis).*

The pouring of the water and the saying of the words of Baptism are things, which can be seen and

heard. They are the *outward signs* of Baptism. Every Sacrament must have outward signs.

3. Now you know what takes place outwardly at Baptism. But *what takes place inwardly in the soul* is truly wonderful. Let us see.

a) Before Baptism the child had a hateful stain on its soul—original sin. That makes the child detestable in God's eyes. Therefore it is not fit to be in Heaven. But the priest pours the baptismal water over its head. At that moment the Holy Ghost comes down upon the one baptized and cleanses the soul from original sin. A Saint once said: "When the baptismal water flows over the head, the Blood of Christ flows over the soul." Those are beautiful words indeed. He means: In the Blood of Christ the soul is made pure from all sin. Take special notice of that: from *all* sin! St. Augustine for over thirty years was a heathen and an impure man and a wicked son of his mother. Then he had himself baptized by the holy Bishop Ambrose. What effects did that Baptism have?—His soul was purified from original sin and from all actual sins.—**In Baptism original sin is forgiven, and all actual sins, if the person baptized be guilty of any.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

b) Now I am curious: Did Augustine have to confess again the sins, which he had committed before Baptism? No! Did he perhaps receive a penance to perform for his sin? No! If Augustine had died immediately after Baptism, would he have been obliged to go to Purgatory? No! And why not?—Because in Baptism are remitted not only all sins, but **the temporal and eternal punishments due to sins are also remitted.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard).* Where there is no temporal punishment anymore, there neither is there any need for further penance, nor for Purgatory. You see, then, that Baptism works even more powerfully than Penance; Baptism reaches to the very bottom of the soul and blots out everything sinful.

c) Let us consider another wonderful effect of Holy Baptism! After the Last Supper the Saviour went with His disciples to the Garden of Olives. On the way they passed a vineyard. The Saviour pointed to the vineyard and said to His disciples: "I am the vine: you are the branches. He that remaineth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for without Me you can do nothing" (John xv, 5s). Thus Jesus compares Himself to a vine and His disciples to the branches of a vine. But He does not wish to call His Apostles only the branches of a vine. You too, all baptized persons, are branches of the vine. The Saviour means: Whoever receives Holy Baptism becomes united to Jesus most closely, even as the branches are united to the vine. How wonderful!— Moreover, the branches get their life-giving sap from the vine. The sap of the vine flows through the branches just as the blood flows through the veins. So, too whoever receives Holy Baptism shares in the life of the vine, which is Jesus Himself. Not indeed in His natural life, for we have that ourselves, but rather in His supernatural life. Christ is more than man, He is God; and God has a supernatural life. He permits us to share in His supernatural life. He does not, of course, make us God himself. For He alone is God, but He can and does allow us to share in His divine life. Yes, all that receive Holy Baptism are allowed to have a share in Jesus' supernatural life, which is sanctifying grace. And as long as we have sanctifying grace, we share in the supernatural, divine nature of Christ; but just as soon as we lose sanctifying grace by mortal sin, we are like the branches, which are cut off from the vine and wither and die. How wonderful! A baptized person becomes most closely united with Christ, is made one with Him, another Christ, a Christian. Our Catechism says: **Baptism makes us Christians.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

(St. Paul teaches us the same truth in different words. Let us see what he says. This great Apostle

compares all Christians to a body, whose Head is Christ Himself. When you came into this world, you were not united with this great body; you were not members of this great family of Christ, the Church. But just as soon as the baptismal water washed your soul from sin and gave you sanctifying grace, Christ united you most closely to this body, this great family of Christians of which He is the Head. He joined you as members to His Church. He incorporated you into His family of children. His supernatural life began to flow through you, even as blood flows through the members of a body. You were made one with Christ, living members of His body, the Church. Henceforth you had a right to share in all the good things of that family. You were made Christ's possession, Christians. How wonderful is not Baptism! It unites us most intimately with Christ, interiorly by sanctifying grace and exteriorly by making us members of His body, the Church. That is what we mean, when we say: *Baptism makes us Christians.)*

d) But there is another effect of Holy Baptism. This Sacrament is like a wonderful bath. When a person has been washed in the holy water of Baptism, he comes forth as a new born creature, regenerated, changed interiorly, made holy, sanctified through the supernatural life of grace. That new, heavenly life makes the soul appear beautiful, yes, so wondrously lovely, that God and His holy Angels look with joy upon that soul. Then that soul is no longer merely a child of man, but it has become a child of God, and also an heir of Heaven. Our Catechism says: **Baptism makes us children of God, and heirs of Heaven.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard).*

Let us now repeat all these wonderful effects together: *Baptism is a Sacrament, which cleanses us from original sin, from actual sins and the punishments due them, makes us Christians, children of God, and heirs of Heaven.*

4. There is another effect of Holy Baptism. In the early days certain masters owned slaves, who were held to belong to their masters body and soul. As a sign that these slaves were the property of their masters the name of their masters was burned into the skin of these slaves indelibly, that is, so that the name could not be erased again. This was a sign to everyone, that such a slave belonged to such and such a master. Now in Baptism the Holy Ghost impresses a mark, a "character," on your soul. It is the seal, as it were, which Christ, the Lord, has impressed upon the lambs and sheep of His flock. This mark is "spiritual," because it is impressed on the soul, which is a spirit. This mark is "indelible," because it can never be effaced by anyone or anything. That is the reason why we can receive Baptism only once. Our Catechism says: **We cannot receive Baptism more than once, because it imprints a character in the soul.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* **5. The character, which this Sacrament imprints in the soul, is a spiritual mark, which remains forever.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard).*

6. This character indicates, that a person is baptized and is a Christian and belongs to Christ; that such a person is Christ's servant, body and soul for all eternity. It is God's own handwriting in the soul. And what does that handwriting say? It says: "I have called thee by thy name: *thou art Mine*" (Isaias xliii, 1). This character will shine in the glory of Heaven, if the baptized person has served God as a good Catholic in life, faithful to the end! It will burn and torture the baptized Christian like a disgraceful stain in Hell, if that person has denied the Faith by a life of sin!—**This character remains in the soul even after death; for the honor and glory of those who are saved; for the shame and punishment of those who are lost.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard).*

(But how does this character benefit us as long as we live? We cannot indeed see it, for we do not see

spiritual things; but the great God, the Angels and Saints, who are spirits, see it. And when they look upon it, they read: "He is one of us! See, he needs our help; the enemies are attacking him, tempting him to sin. Yes, we must help him"! And they do help him just as one soldier helps another on the battle front, if he sees by his uniform that he is a comrade. Do you understand now, dear children, what wonderful effects Baptism produces in the soul?)

Write on the blackboard:

1. How is Baptism given?—Baptismal water—Baptismal words (outward sign).
2. The one baptized is
   a) cleansed from all sin (original, actual) (3);
   b) freed from all punishments due his sins (temporal, eternal);
   c) made a child of God, an heir to Heaven;
   d) impressed with indelible character on soul (5); hence Baptism may be given only once (4); character remains forever (6).

Synthesis. We have answered two important questions today. How is Baptism given? What are the effects of Baptism?—Why do we say, that in Baptism man is cleansed from all sin?—Is the punishment that is due to sin also remitted in Baptism?—Why do we say, that man is "born again to eternal life"?—How is this rebirth (regeneration) caused?—What sign does Baptism impress on the soul?—Is this sign visible?—Indelible?—Why can Baptism be received only once?—Does this character remain in the soul even after death?—Why?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. Baptism is valid only when it is rightly conferred. Now I am going to see whether you have understood everything correctly. A person pours water three times over the head of the one to be baptized and says at the same time: "In the name

of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost". Is that Baptism valid?—Another person makes the sign of the cross over the child and says: "I baptize thee in the name . . ." Many Protestants baptize like this: "I baptize thee in the name of the Holy Trinity"; or "I baptize thee in the name of Jesus." Judge for yourselves!—A Protestant pastor speaks the words of Baptism and his janitor pours the water.—Another sprinkles a little water on the child and speaks the words of Baptism at the same time . . . .

2. The person baptized is made clean from all sin and is freed from all punishments due his sins. If a person that has just been baptized, whether he be big or little, dies, the priest does not wear the black stole, but rather the white one. Neither does he pray: "O Lord, grant unto him eternal rest!" No service for the repose of his soul is held. Do you know why?—He is already gone into eternal rest; he does not go to Purgatory even for a moment. Consequently he does not need our prayers any more.—In former times many a one was not baptized until he lay upon his death bed. Was this a wise thing?—Such persons, indeed, entered immediately into Heaven, but they had no merits for Heaven.

3. A baptized person becomes a child of God and the Church. You know, that many Protestants also have their children baptized. Therefore they all belong to our Church. Christ has instituted only *one* Baptism. Whoever receives it, becomes a child of His Church. Baptism makes one a Catholic; therefore every baptized Protestant was once a Catholic. If a Protestant is converted to the Catholic religion, we say: "He is returning to the true Church." Perfectly correct! For only later on did he reject the Catholic Church.

4. In Holy Baptism you became children of God and heirs of Heaven. That is a high dignity and a great grace. To you too did the priest say the serious words of counsel: "Receive this white garment and bring it back unspotted before the judgment-seat of

Jesus Christ!" Have you hitherto preserved it? Poor child, if you have soiled it with serious sin! Happy child, if you still have it in your heart! Guard it as a most precious treasure.

5. One of the ancient Roman Emperors had a pet stag, which used to come and feed out of his hand, and lived in the gardens of the palace. No one dared to touch it, because everyone knew that it belonged to the Emperor. But being afraid that huntsmen, who did not know it, might perchance kill it, the Emperor made a collar of gold and put it around the stag's neck. On the collar were inscribed these words: "I belong to the Emperor. Do not touch me"! When people read these words they let the stag alone. My child, God has written these words in your very soul: "I belong to God. Do not touch me"! So when temptation comes near you, think of this, and tell Satan to depart, for you are not his, but God's.

LESSON III.

Private Baptism.

Catechetical Unit:

1) Who can administer Baptism? L. XIV, Q. 155.
2) What is Baptism of blood? L. XIV, Q. 160.
3) What is Baptism of desire? L. XIV, Q. 159.
4) Is Baptism of desire or of blood sufficient to produce the effects of Baptism of water? L. XIV, Q. 161.
5) How many kinds of Baptism are there? L. XIV, Q. 157.

Preparation. Dear children, King Louis, the Pious, of France, often said: "The castle chapel, where I was baptized, is more to me than the cathedral of Rheims, where I was crowned king. For in Baptism I became a child of God, and that is a higher dignity than the kingly dignity." That is so. You already know the graces of Baptism. Many things are taken

away from the baptized person, but many more things are given him; something detestable is taken from his soul, but something wonderfully beautiful is given to his soul. Let us review this briefly. *(Question the pupils on the foregoing lesson.)*

When the priest administers Holy Baptism he confers solemn Baptism. But sometimes it is impossible to bring a child to church because it is in danger of death. Such a child then receives private Baptism. In heathen countries (missionary lands) it happens also frequently, that there is no priest at hand. Who then is to baptize?

Aim. We are going to learn of that today: *Who can validly baptize in case of necessity?*

Presentation. In a Catholic mission-house there were two sisters, both of them still heathen children. They were already well instructed in the Christian Faith. Radiant with joy they were waiting for the coming morning, for it was to be their baptismal day. However, this joy was changed into bitter sorrow. While they were lying in a deep sleep, suddenly they were awakened by a deafening noise. What is the matter? Half savage heathens had fallen upon the mission-house. They plundered and burned everything. The missionaries were murdered or led away in chains. Our two poor heathen children were also thrown into prison. They knew very well what was in store for them, and prepared themselves for death.

The smaller of the two was all disconsolate and said weeping: "I have been looking forward with joy and longing to Holy Baptism! Tomorrow we would have become Christians and children of God and now we must die as heathen children." The older girl comforted her little sister: "Dear little sister, do not be so sad! Do you no longer know what we have heard in the instructions? Why, we may die for Jesus; then we shall come to Jesus in Heaven." Thereupon the child noticed a jug of water. Trembling with joy she

exclaimed: "See little sister! there is water. Let us pray together and then I will baptize you."

At once both of them knelt down and began to pray: "Dear Father in Heaven, look down upon Thy poor children! We believe all that the Church teaches. We renounce the devil and all sin. We will live and die like Christians. Grant us the grace of Holy Baptism and let us come to Thee in Heaven." Then the bigger sister arose and asked her little sister: "Wilt thou be baptized?" Earnestly and firmly the little one answered: "I will be baptized." Then her sister poured the water over the head of the child and spoke the words of Holy Baptism: "Mary, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost!" Thereupon the older sister knelt down and received Holy Baptism from the younger sister. Fervently both of them gave thanks: "Thanks be to Thee, O God, a thousand thanks! Now we will gladly die." In the morning they died as martyrs. The day of their Baptism was for them the day of their death and also their birthday for Heaven.

Explanation. 1. Now tell me: Did these two children do the proper thing? Could they and might they baptize each other?—Both of them were, of course, as yet heathen children; and yet the Baptism was valid. For not only the priest, but any one who has the use of reason may baptize validly. Ordinarily only the priest may baptize, but in case of necessity, in extraordinary cases, others may also baptize. Our Catechism says: **The priest is the ordinary minister of Baptism; but in case of necessity any one who has the use of reason may baptize.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis).* It is all the same, whether the one baptizing be a heathen or a Jew, a Catholic or a Protestant, a man or a woman or a child. Only two things are absolutely necessary: The one baptizing must have the intention of conferring Christian Baptism, and he must, while baptizing, do all things correctly. So it

was in the case of these two children: they had the right intention and they did everything correctly. How did they baptize?—The Baptism, which anyone can administer, is called private Baptism.

But perhaps you are surprised, that everyone can baptize. The reason for that you yourselves can readily discover.—Without Baptism no one can be saved. "But God wills that all men should be saved," says St. Paul. No man will be lost except by his own fault. Therefore Christ made the reception of Baptism so easy. We cannot thank the kind and merciful and wise God enough for that.

2. Every man *can* baptize validly; but not everyone *may* baptize. If there is no necessity, the child is to be brought to the church, so that the priest may solemnly baptize it. Why? That you will easily understand. —The priests are specially appointed for that work. For to the Apostles did Christ say: "Going therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them." That is the first reason. Then too the priest can baptize best of all; that is the second reason.—But neither may the priest baptize wherever and whenever he wills. In the Church there must be beautiful order. Consequently the Bishop sends into every parish one or more priests as shepherds of his flock. These priests have also the right and duty to administer Baptism.—Remember that: *Any person can validly baptize; but, except in cases of necessity, only priests, who have the care of souls, are allowed to baptize. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. Let us look again at the two children. The smaller one complained and wept, saying: "We must die as heathen children." But the bigger one calmed her little sister with the words: "We may die for Jesus; then we shall go to Jesus in Heaven." Is that true?—Yes, Jesus Himself has said it: "He that shall lose his life for Me, shall find it" (Matt. x, 39). The Saviour means: Whoever gives up his life for My sake, will receive the reward of Heaven for it. But

whoever dies a martyr's death for love of Christ, is baptized in his own blood. This Baptism is called the Baptism of blood.—**Baptism of blood is the shedding of one's blood for the faith of Christ.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

4. The two children were beside themselves with joy on the eve of their Baptism. They could scarcely wait for the following morning, so ardent was their longing for Holy Baptism. In their young hearts there glowed the holy fire of the love of God; and surely deep down in their hearts they felt a detestation over having hitherto frequently been so wicked and unthankful to their good Father in Heaven. Now if the children had died without Baptism, do you think, the good God would have rejected them? No, they would have been saved through their holy desire for Baptism and through their ardent love of God. That is the Baptism of desire: **Baptism of desire is an ardent wish to receive Baptism and to do all that God has ordained for our salvation.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard).* In other words, Baptism of desire is the same as an act of perfect charity, or of perfect contrition, together with the determined will to receive Baptism, or to do all that God has ordained for our salvation.

5. Now you know how many kinds of Baptisms there are. **There are three kinds of Baptism: Baptism of water, of desire, and of blood.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard underlining the three words).* Every man ought to receive the Baptism of water, for that is the will of Christ. But **Baptism of desire or of blood is sufficient to produce the effects of Baptism of water, if it is impossible to receive the Baptism of water.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

1. Private Baptism—every man;
2. Solemn Baptism—priests—pastors of souls;
3. *Baptism of blood*—martyrdom for Christ;

4. *Baptism of desire*—ardent desire for Baptism, perfect charity, or contrition;
5. Baptism of desire, or of blood—same effects as *Baptism of water*—if impossible to receive Baptism of water.

Synthesis. God does everything in order that we may be saved; but man must also co-operate. We have seen that today again in regard to Baptism. Who can administer Baptism?—What is the Baptism called, which any one can administer?—the Baptism of the priest?—Can Baptism of water ever be replaced by any other Baptism?—What is Baptism of blood?—of desire?—How many kinds of Baptism are there?—Is Baptism of blood or desire sufficient to produce the effects of Baptism of water?—Which of these is the Sacrament of Baptism?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. Every man can baptize validly. When a child is brought to Holy Baptism, the priest first asks: "Has the child already received private Baptism?"—A second Baptism is forbidden. If the child has received Baptism validly, it is already a child of God. Then only the prayers and holy ceremonies are supplied.—You know, that the Protestants have Holy Baptism. If a Protestant later on becomes a Catholic, may he be baptized again?—And yet, oftentimes one hears of a re-baptism. Then the Protestants rail against our holy Church and say, that we do not hold their Baptism to be valid. That is not true. But this much is true, that many Protestants do not baptize validly.—A teacher was instructing the children about Holy Baptism. In the school there was also a Jewish girl. During the noon recess the teacher suddenly heard a loud cry of joy. "What is the matter?" "We baptized Sophie!" the children exclaimed. Two of the bigger girls had indeed conferred Holy Baptism on the Jewish girl. "Did you really have the intention of baptizing?" the teacher asked with concern?

"Yes!" Was the Baptism valid? It was if the Jewish girl intended to receive Baptism.—The children, of course, did not commit any sin, because they did not thoroughly understand what they were doing.

2. Baptism of blood holds good for Baptism of water. Who received the Baptism of blood?—St. John the Baptist died for Christ. The Holy Innocents were baptized in their own blood; for they lost their lives for the Infant Jesus.—St. Agnes died as a youthful martyr. Once many Christians went to her grave, in order to pray. Heathens wanted to drive them away and threw stones at them and wounded them. Among these there was also a friend and playmate of Agnes, named Emmerentiana. She was not yet baptized. When the heathens approached, she faced them and rebuked them. But they picked up stones and stoned her to death. Thus did Emmerentiana receive the Baptism of blood.

3. Baptism of desire also holds good for Baptism of water. The Roman Emperor Valentinian was as yet a heathen, but he wanted to become a Christian. Therefore he traveled to Milan, in order to be baptized by St. Ambrose. On the way thither he was murdered. His relations were disconsolate. But the holy Bishop comforted them, saying: "He was baptized, because he desired to be baptized." He meant to say: He became a Christian by the Baptism of desire and is saved.

LESSON IV.

Baptismal Vows—Baptismal Sponsors.

Catechetical Unit:

1) What do we promise in Baptism? L. XIV, Q. 162.
2) Why are godfathers and godmothers given in Baptism? L. XIV, Q. 164.
3) What is the obligation of a godfather and a godmother? L. XIV, Q. 164.

4) Why is the name of a Saint given in Baptism? L. XIV, Q. 163.

Preparation. Dear children, Baptism is the gate to Heaven. Only through Baptism can we enter into the kingdom of Heaven. Because Baptism is so necessary, God has made baptizing so easy. Who can baptize validly?—But there is a threefold Baptism: Baptism of water, Baptism of blood, Baptism of desire. You heard about that in the last class. *(Question the pupils briefly on the foregoing lesson.)*

God adopts the baptized person as His child and promises him eternal life. To be sure, the baptized person too must promise something.—At Holy Baptism you also received a sponsor. The sponsor likewise must promise something.

Aim. You are to hear of that today: 1) *What does the person baptized promise?* (2) *What does the sponsor promise?*

Presentation. In the early Christian Church when a heathen received Baptism, he had first to renounce the devil and then pledge loyalty to Christ. It took place in this way: The person to be baptized first turned in the direction of the setting of the sun (consequently toward the west). Then the Bishop asked him solemnly: "Dost thou renounce Satan?" The person to be baptized had to answer: "I do renounce him." "Dost thou renounce all his works?" The one about to receive Baptism replied: "I do renounce them."

Thereupon the person to be baptized turned in the direction of the rising of the sun (consequently towards the east), and again the Bishop asked him solemnly: "Wilt thou believe in the Christian Faith and live and die in this Faith?" Then the one to be baptized made a profession of his Faith. Only then did he receive Holy Baptism.

The sponsor took his ward by the hand and led him down the steps to the baptismal font, or basin. There

the one to be baptized was dipped, or immersed, three times beneath the water, while the Bishop spoke the words of Holy Baptism: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Thereupon the sponsor led his ward out again. If the one baptized happened to be a child, the sponsor lifted him out of the water. But the Bishop gave the newly baptized person a white garment and anointed the crown of his head as a sign, that now: Thou art a Christian, an anointed of the Lord.

Explanation. 1. You do not, of course, understand everything perfectly as yet. I must explain some points to you.

a) The person to be baptized first looked in the direction of the setting sun. That has a very beautiful meaning.—When the sun has set, everything gradually becomes dark. There in the west the people of old imagined was the kingdom of darkness. The prince in the kingdom of darkness is the devil. Do you now understand the significant ceremony?—The one to be baptized meant to say: "Depart from me Satan! I will have nothing further to do with thee and all thy works, and all thy pomps (or vanities)." Do you know the works of the devil? They are sin and the dangers to sin, the wicked occasions of sins. But why renounce especially the devil's pomps, or vanities?—Vanity, or pride, is the root of all evil. Back of every sin there lurks a little pride. Through pride Lucifer and his angels fell and became devils. Through pride our first parents fell and became unhappy. Therefore, the person to be baptized had to renounce Satan.

Just so formerly, so now the one to be baptized must renounce (or vow to avoid) everything that is displeasing to God, and to lead a life such as pleases God.—**In Baptism we promise to renounce the devil with all his works and pomps.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

b) Thereupon the person to be baptized looked towards the rising sun. That again has a deep meaning. In the east in the morning the sun rises in the heavens. There the people of old imagined was the kingdom of light. But the king in the kingdom of light is Christ; for He brought us from Heaven the light of truth and of grace. The person to be baptized turned in that direction, in order to profess solemnly his Faith and to vow loyalty to Christ.

Now it is still customary with us, that the person to receive Holy Baptism must solemnly profess his Faith. The priest says: "Dost thou believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?" —"I do believe!" "Dost thou believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, Who was born and suffered for us?"—"I do believe!" "Dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost, one Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?"—"I do believe!" And how long ought the person to be baptized to preserve faithfully the Catholic Faith?—Until he will see Christ face to face.—Yes, *in Baptism we promise to believe the Catholic teachings firmly and steadfastly until death. (Repeat together.)*

This promise of the one to be baptized is called the *baptismal vow,* or covenant. Why baptismal covenant?—When two persons enter into an agreement, or covenant, with each other, one promises something to the other. In Baptism God and the person baptized enter into an agreement, or covenant, with each other. The person baptized promises: I will believe and live as a Christian! And God promises him: I will give you eternal life for that!

2. I have just been speaking about the promises of the person to be baptized. The priest asks various questions of the child that is about to receive Baptism, although he knows that the child does not understand them at all. But it also happens, that grown up people are baptized, and formerly that was much more com-

mon than now. When an adult is baptized, he understands the questions of the priest and can also answer in his own name. But because these questions are full of meaning the Church does not want to omit them even at the Baptism of infants. Therefore the godfather and godmother (godparents, sponsors) answer the questions in the child's name. They do in the child's stead everything, that the child would have to do for itself, if it could think and speak.—**Godfathers and godmothers are given in Baptism, in order that they may promise, in the name of the child, what the child itself would promise if it had the use of reason.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. a) From our story you recall what the duty of the sponsor was in the early days.—He used to lead the person to be baptized down the steps to the baptismal font, or basin, and back up again. Now he holds the child at the solemn moment of Baptism in his arms, or at least he places his hand upon the child. This ceremony is not without its meaning. Thereby the sponsor declares, as it were: I take this child under my care. I will be to him a visible Guardian Angel. I promise to see to it, that this child receives proper instructions in his religious duties.—**The obligation of the godfather and the godmother is to instruct the child in his religious duties.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

b) In the earliest days the office of sponsors was very important. Then there were many dangers to Faith and Christian life. Not unfrequently did it happen, that a Christian fell back into pagan idolatry. Then it was the sacred duty of the godfather and the godmother to lead that person back to the right path. Nowadays the office of sponsor is, of course, not so very significant. Our children have Christian parents and attend Christian schools. But if the parents of a child were to die, or to neglect their duty towards the child, the godfather and the godmother would be bound in conscience to interest themselves in that poor child,

and to educate it in a Christian manner, or at least to see to it, that the child receives proper religious instruction.—Consequently the obligation of a godfather and a godmother is to instruct the child in its religious duties, **if the parents neglect to do so or die.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Now tell me yourselves: May one choose a Protestant to be sponsor?—May a bad Catholic act as sponsor?—Whoever himself is not a good Catholic, cannot educate others to be good Catholics.—(The sponsors and the person baptized become spiritually related to each other.)

4. Every person baptized receives at Baptism a name; that is then his *baptismal name.* For this purpose we always choose the name of a Saint; he then is the Patron Saint of the person baptized. That has also its meaning.—The Saint, whose name is chosen, is the special protector and intercessor with God in Heaven for the person baptized. But that Saint ought also to be a model for the life of the one who is baptized.—**The name of a Saint is given in Baptism, in order that the person baptized may imitate his virtues and have him for a protector.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*—King Alexander was a brave hero in war. In his army there was a certain soldier, who also was called Alexander; but he was a coward in battle. The king called him one day to himself and spoke to him in the following way: "Are you called Alexander? Then either be an Alexander or lay aside your name!"—So, too, I say to you: "Are you called Joseph, or Mary? Well, then, be a Joseph, or a Mary, in your daily life; otherwise you are not worthy to be called by that name!"

Write on the blackboard:

1. The person baptized promises—to renounce the devil, his works, his pomps (to please God—to believe firmly).
2. The sponsors promise—in the child's name.

3. The sponsors' duty—to instruct child in religious duties (if parents are negligent, or die).
4. Baptismal name—Saint is protector and model.

Synthesis. We promise great things in Holy Baptism; but greater things are promised to us. What do we promise in Baptism?—Why is that promise called baptismal covenant?—What do the sponsors promise? —Who can be a sponsor?—What are the duties of sponsors?—Why is a name given in Holy Baptism? *(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. Once we all promised God fidelity and God promised us Heaven. God will keep His promise, for He is faithful; but we too must be faithful to our promise. Therefore you ought frequently to renew your baptismal vow, particularly on the anniversary of your Holy Baptism. You will do that also solemnly on the day of your First Communion (and again at Holy Confirmation).

2. Elpidophorus received, as was customary in his days, a white garment on the day of his Baptism from his sponsor, the deacon Muritta, with the words: "Receive this white garment and bring it back unsoiled before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ." Later on, however, Elpidophorus denied the Faith and became a heathen again. Soon afterwards the Christians were bitterly persecuted. Then he even accepted the office of judge. Muritta also came before his tribunal. But he was well aware of his duty as sponsor. Therefore he took the white garment with him, which he had once placed on his ward; and drawing it forth from under his mantle he held it before the eyes of the apostate Elpidophorus with the words: "Unfaithful one, see here the white garment! In this garment you swore fidelity to God and you renounced the devil with all his works and his pomps. And you have broken your loyalty and committed treason against Christ, the eternal Judge. This white garment will testify against

you at the judgment-seat of Jesus Christ, will accuse you, condemn you!" This terrible shame the unhappy man could not stand. Struck with terror he fell down from the judgment-seat and died.

3. Children, you also once promised Christ loyalty. If you do not keep your word, Christ will some day say to you as He did to the slothful servant: "Out of thy own mouth will I judge thee. Thou hast promised Me to believe and to live and to die in a Christian manner; thou hast not kept thy word: Depart from Me!" But if you keep your baptismal vow faithfully, the eternal Judge, Christ, will say to you: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: Enter thou into the joys of thy Lord!"

LESSON V.

Solemn Baptism.

Catechetical Unit:

Which are the chief ceremonies used at solemn Baptism?

Preparation. Dear children, recall that never-to-be-forgotten day when you were made children of God by Holy Baptism, and repeat again and again from your hearts the promises you made on that occasion. These words were registered in Heaven. God heard them; the Angels also heard them and rejoiced. Satan heard them, too, and was filled with anger; and on the judgment-day you will see them written in the book of God's eternal judgments. Let us now review this lesson briefly. *(Question the pupils on the foregoing lesson.)*

The Baptism, which anyone can administer, is called Private Baptism, but the Baptism, which only the priest can ordinarily confer, is called Solemn Baptism. Why Solemn Baptism?—A precious gem is enclosed in gold; thereby it becomes really more beautiful. Now Holy Baptism is worth a thousand times more than the most precious gem. It, too, is enclosed in a

beautiful case of signficant words and signs. Thereby it becomes more solemn. These signs and words are called "ceremonies." You already know some of these holy ceremonies.

Aim. Now I am going *to describe for you Solemn Baptism and explain the meaning of each ceremony.*

Presentation and Explanation.

A. Ceremonies Before Baptism.

1. The person to be baptized is still a heathen. Therefore he may not enter into the church, but must wait at the church door. Then the priest comes and receives him and asks: "How is this child to be called?" The sponsor says the name: "Aloysius or Agnes." The priest asks further: "Aloysius, what dost thou ask of the Church of God?" — "Faith." "What doth Faith give to thee?"—"Life everlasting." "If, therefore, thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself."

The person to be baptized asks for Faith. That will perhaps surprise you. Why does he not ask for Baptism?—Without Faith Baptism is powerless. That Jesus Himself has said: "He that believeth and is baptized, will be saved" (Mark xvi, 16). To be sure, simply to believe is not sufficient; no, but to believe and to live according to that Faith is the way to eternal life. Therefore the priest expressly and emphatically insists upon that, saying: "If, therefore, thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments!" All the Commandments are contained briefly in the great Commandment: Love God above all things and thy neighbor as thyself! *(Use the blackboard; insert the word: Questions.)*

2. After these questions the priest blows three times into the face of the person to be baptized. At the same time he prays: "Depart from him (her), unclean spirit, and give place to the Holy Spirit, the

Paraclete!". And immediately he makes the sign of the cross on the forehead and the breast of the child, saying: "Receive the sign of the cross on thy forehead and breast; observe faithfully the Commandments of God and so walk, that thou mayest be a temple of God!" In a prayer the priest then begs God, to give to him, that is to be baptized, the strength to fulfil that duty.

What does the blowing into the face signify?—The little prayer tells us: "Depart from him (her), unclean spirit, and give place to the Holy Spirit!" The wicked spirit has still power over the child; but through Baptism the child is to become a temple of the Holy Ghost. That is a great grace and a high dignity; we owe that to Christ, the Crucified One. Therefore the child receives the sign of the cross, and that indeed on his forehead and breast. That ought to be for the one to be baptized an exhortation: Bear Christ's teachings faithfully in thy heart and profess Christ's teachings in thy life! *(Use the blackboard; insert the words: Blowing—Sign of the Cross.)*

3. Hereupon the priest places into the mouth of the child a few grains of salt, that has been blessed, and says: "Aloysius, receive the salt of wisdom; may it be to thee forgiveness unto eternal life!"

That, too, has a beautiful meaning. You know, that salt preserves from corruption. So, too, the person to be baptized is to be preserved from the corruption of sin. But salt also makes food tasteful, savoury. So, too, the Christian ought to have a taste for the teachings and Commandments of Christ. That is true wisdom; everything else is only foolishness. Why? For doing that he will some day obtain eternal life. Then he will be allowed to see God and enjoy Him, and that is the greatest happiness. *(Use the blackboard. Insert the word: Salt.)*

4. Now the priest exorcizes the evil spirit. At the same time he makes the sign of the cross three times over the child and says: "I exorcize thee, unclean

spirit, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Go out from and leave this servant of God!" Then he again makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of the child and prays: "And this sign of the cross, which we impress on the forehead of this child, never dare, unclean spirit, to violate!"

Here it is not necessary to explain much. Christ gave His Apostles power over the wicked spirits. This power the priest has also. In Christ's name he drives out the spirit of darkness. The sign of the cross is impressed on the forehead of the one to be baptized. Why?—The evil spirit fears the cross and flees before it; for on the cross Christ conquered Satan. *(Use the blackboard. Insert the word: Exorcism.)*

5. After this exorcism the priest leads the one to be baptized into the church. He places his stole on the child, saying at the same time: "Aloysius, enter into the temple of God, so that thou mayest have a share with Christ unto eternal life!" While they enter the church, the Apostles' Creed and the Our Father are recited aloud. These two prayers ought from the moment of Baptism ever to be for a Christian his daily bread, as it were. *(Use the blackboard. Insert the words: Entrance into the church.)*

6. The priest halts just before the baptismal font. Again he exorcizes the spirit of darkness; for the moment of Baptism is at hand. Then the priest touches the ears and the nostrils of the person to be baptized with spittle, saying at the same time: "Ephpheta, i. e., be thou opened unto the odor of sweetness!" In a like manner Christ once acted over the man that was deaf and dumb. He put His finger into the ears and touched the tongue of that man with spittle and said to him: "Ephpheta, that is, be thou opened!" And immediately his ears were opened and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke right (Mark vii, 33-35).—Now you can easily understand the meaning of this ceremony. The heathen is hard of hearing (deaf) as regards the good. But the Christian ought to listen to

the word of God joyfully and never listen to the voice of the wicked spirit. *(Use the blackboard. Insert the words: Moistening with spittle.)*

7. The priest has exorcized the devil. Now the one to be baptized must himself renounce the devil. You already know how the priest goes about it by the questions he asks.—"Aloysius, dost thou renounce Satan?" —"I do renounce him!" "And all his works?"—"I do renounce them!" "And all his pomps?"—"I do renounce them!"

But that is not so easy to renounce all the works of the devil—sin and the dangers to sin. To do that the person to be baptized needs strength from above. Therefore immediately after this he is anointed with holy oil (oil of the Catechumens) on the breast and between the shoulders. A Christian ought to fight against Satan and the wicked world and wicked pleasure. A Christian ought to carry the yoke of Christ, that is, faithfully keep God's Commandments. God's grace must make him strong for that purpose.—(While Augustine was still a heathen, his heart often became heavy within him, when he thought: As a Christian I ought to live chastely and temperately, overcome pride, love my enemies. He imagined that all that was simply impossible for him. Then he received Holy Baptism and behold, everything became easy for him. Now he understood the words of Christ: "My yoke is sweet and My burden light.") *(Use the blackboard. Insert the words: Baptismal vow.)*

8. After the baptismal vow the one to be baptized must also solemnly profess his Faith. What does the priest ask?—"Aloysius, dost thou believe in God, the Father almight, Creator of heaven and earth?"—"I do believe!" "Dost thou believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, Who was born and suffered for us?"—"I do believe!" "Dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?"—"I do believe!" *(Use*

the blackboard. Insert the words: Profession of Faith.)

9. Now the great moment has come. Earnestly and solemnly the priest asks: "Aloysius, wilt thou be baptized?"—"I will!"

Why does the priest ask this question so solemnly? —He wants to admonish the person about to be baptized of this truth: You are about to take an important step, that is decisive for all eternity. But the person to be baptized ought to show, that he is really in holy earnestness, that he wishes to become a Christian and a perfect Christian. *(Use the blackboard. Insert the words: Desire for Baptism.)*

10. How does the priest baptize?—At this moment the Holy Ghost comes down upon the one baptized and purifies his soul and decorates it with the wonderful garment of sanctifying grace. Now that child is a living temple of the Holy Ghost, a child of Christ and a child of God. His name is written in the book of eternal life. *(Use the blackboard. Insert the word: Baptism.)*

Write on the blackboard:

Ceremonies before Baptism:

1. Questions;
2. Blowing—sign of the cross;
3. Salt;
4. Exorcisms;
5. Entrance into the church;
6. Moistening with spittle;
7. Baptismal vow;
8. Profession of Faith;
9. Desire for Baptism;
10. Baptism.

B. Ceremonies after Baptism.

11. Immediately after Baptism the priest anoints the child with holy chrism on the crown of its head

and prays: "God almighty, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, hath regenerated thee in water and the Holy Ghost and given thee forgiveness of sins: may He anoint thee with the chrism of salvation in the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, unto eternal life." He means to say: Thou art now a Christian—an anointed of the Lord. Thou hast a high and a great dignity. Give honor to thy name and be a perfect Christian; imitate Christ! *(Use the blackboard. Insert the words: Anointed with chrism.)*

12. Hereupon the priest adorns the newly baptized person with the white garment. You know the beautiful words, which he says on that occasion.—"Receive the white garment and bring it back unspotted before the judgment-seat of Jesus Christ, in order that thou mayest have life everlasting!" Glorious words of counsel! Behold, you have received the garment of innocence. Preserve it carefully during your entire life; do not soil it with the filth of sin. May your garment of innocence be your heavenly wedding garment! *(Use the blackboard. Insert the words: White garment.)*

13. Now a final ceremony follows. The priest hands to the baptized person a burning candle with the words: "Receive this burning candle and preserve thy Baptism without blame. Keep the Commandments of God, so that when the Lord comes to His nuptials, thou mayest meet Him with all the Saints of the heavenly court, and mayest have eternal life, and live forever and ever. Amen."

Did you grasp the meaning? As the burning candle, so, in the heart of the person baptized, ought to burn the love of God; so, too, ought sanctifying grace to shine. But the candle also reminds the one baptized of the words of the Lord: "Let your light shine before all men, that they may see your works, and glorify your Father, Who is in Heaven" (Matt. v, 16). A true Christian ought to light the way to all by his pious, virtuous life. *(Use the blackboard. Insert the words: Baptismal candle.)*

14. Holy Baptism is over. The priest dismisses the newly baptized person with the beautiful greeting: "Aloysius, go in peace and may the Lord be with thee!" *(Use the blackboard. Insert the words: Greeting of peace.)*

Write on the blackboard:

Ceremonies after Baptism:

11. Anointing with chrism;
12. White garment;
13. Baptismal candle;
14. Greeting of peace.

Application. 1. Now you know the holy ceremonies of Baptism and their wealth of meaning. You may also come into the church and watch the priest administer the Sacrament.

(The catechist ought not to neglect to lead the children in groups into the church. The instructions concerning Holy Baptism will become fruitful and be lastingly impressed on their memories only by actual observation.)

2. For today let us renew together what we all promised to God at Holy Baptism:

"O God! through Thy merciful love as a weak, young infant have I been purified from sin in Holy Baptism, renewed to Thy image, sanctified by Thy grace and received into Thy Church.

Joyfully I profess my Faith in Thee, O Father, in Thy Son, in the Holy Ghost, and I will live and die in the *One,* Holy, Catholic Church according to this holy and saving Faith.

I renounce anew all sin, the devil and all his pomps and all his works; I vow to Thee again to keep faithfully all Thy Commandments, to love Thee above all things and my fellowmen as myself.

I beg Thee, awaken, renew in me the grace, which Thou didst give me in Holy Baptism through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

LESSON VI.

Renewal of Baptismal Vows.
(Supplementary)

Catechetical Unit:

Explain the ceremony of the renewal of the baptismal vows.

(N. B. The beautiful and impressive ceremony of the renewal of the baptismal vows takes place either on the occasion of First Holy Communion or more generally on the day of Holy Confirmation. The ceremonies connected with this public act ought to be performed with as much solemnity as possible. Since, however, there is no uniformly adopted mode of procedure in this matter, the questions and answers we have presented and explained are a reproduction of the instruction arranged by Dr. Stieglitz. Each catechist may select and abridge as local custom and his own good judgment dictate.)

Preparation. Dear children, in Holy Baptism you have made a covenant with the good God, the baptismal covenant. God adopted you as His children and promised you Heaven; but you promised to believe as Catholics and to live as good children of God. What do we vow in Holy Baptism?—*(Question the pupils briefly on lesson IV.)*—This solemn baptismal covenant you are about to renew now (on the day of your First Holy Communion—Holy Confirmation.) Seventeen (or less) questions are placed before you, and you are to answer them with heart and mouth. But you will not understand all these questions without some special explanation.

Aim. Therefore *I am going to explain for you briefly today the baptismal vows.* For every child ought to know what he promises God.

Presentation, Explanation, Application.

First, twelve questions are addressed to you concerning Faith. Each time you are to answer: *"We do believe."*

1. Do you believe in God, the Father, almighty, Ceator of heaven and earth?

It is not necessary to explain much here. You all know: How many persons are there in God?—Why is God called "Creator of Heaven and earth?" — The Father is the Creator of the world. He said: "Let it be made!" And all was made. Every man is a little world. The Father has created you, too. You ought to thank Him for that and live for God.

2. Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Who became man for our sakes and died on the cross for us?

Neither is this new to you. Who is Jesus Christ?—Christ is God's Son; the whole Christian religion depends upon that truth. We believe that firmly and profess with Peter: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God!" Why did the Son of God become man?—Why did Jesus wish to suffer and to die?—Christ's death is our life. "If Christ had not died, we all should have been lost." How much love and thanks we owe Jesus! "I thank Thee, Lord Jesus Christ, that Thou hast died for me. O, let not Thy Blood and Passion be in vain for me!"

3. Do you believe, that Jesus Christ arose again on the third day from the dead and that He ascended into Heaven, and from thence He shall come again to judge the living and the dead?

This question includes the fifth, sixth and seventh articles of the Apostles' Creed. — On Good Friday evening the Body of Jesus was laid in the grave. Mary, the Mother of Sorrows, and the disciples were all sunk in sorrow. But soon their sorrow was changed into joy. What happened on the morning of the third day?—Jesus came forth alive and transfigured from the sealed grave. That is our Easter Faith. How long did Jesus continue on earth?—After forty days came the hour of departure. Jesus journeyed with His dear ones to Mount Olivet, blessed them again, for the last time on earth, and ascended into Heaven. But Christ will come again. The angel announced that: "This Jesus, Who is taken up from you to Heaven, shall so

come as you have seen Him going into Heaven" (Acts of Apostle i, 11). When will that happen?—To be sure, then Jesus will come no longer as Redeemer, but as Judge, no longer poor and humble as at His birth, but with great power and majesty.

4. Do you believe in the Holy Ghost, Who has spoken through the Prophets, Apostles and Evangelists?

Which Prophets do you know?—The Prophets had to teach the people of God, admonish, warn, punish; but they also prophesied, or foretold, the things that were to happen. Through their mouth the Holy Ghost spoke.—Who are the twelve Apostles?—Also through them did the Holy Ghost speak. Just think of the feast of Pentecost, of the first council of Christians at Jerusalem. Two of the Apostles, Matthew and John, wrote down the life and teachings and sufferings of Christ; likewise two disciples of the Apostles, Mark and Luke. These four are called Evangelists. The Holy Ghost moved them to write the Gospel; the Holy Ghost also enlightened them, so that they might write everything correctly. Thus did the Holy Ghost speak also through the Evangelists.

5. Do you believe in one, holy, catholic, apostolic Church and in the Communion of Saints?

That is the ninth article of the Apostles' Creed.—The Church is the great family of Christians on the whole earth. Christ has instituted only one Church; for He said to Peter: "Upon this rock I will build My Church." This Church is holy; for all of her children are to be holy and many are already Saints in Heaven. This Church is catholic or universal; for she is for all men of all times and she is also spread over the wide world. This Church is apostolic; for Christ founded it upon the Apostles and the Apostles continue to live in the Pope and in the Bishops.

6. Do you believe in the forgiveness of sins, in the resurrection of the body and in life everlasting?

That is the contents of the last three articles of the Creed. Where do we receive the forgiveness of sins? —For this purpose we have Baptism and Penance; both are from Christ. Thus do we believe. Because of sin we must die. After death the body returns to the earth, whence it has been taken. But that is really only a sleep of death. How so?—On the last day Christ will send forth His Angels and they will call into all graves: "Awaken, all ye dead! It is the resurrection of the body." Then all will rise and appear at the judgment. But after the judgment eternal life begins in Heaven.

7. Do you believe that the Sacred Scripture of the Old and New Testaments and the Tradition of the Church are to be reverenced, honored and obeyed as the revelations of God?

This you will not as yet understand. How is the Bible divided?—What the Old Testament relates holy men have written down in the Old Testament; what the New Testament narrates we have from the Apostles. You already know: Who has spoken through the mouth of these holy men?—The contents of the Sacred Scriptures, therefore, come from God; they are revelations of God. Therefore we must reverence and honor and obey them.—But the Apostles did not write down everything about Jesus; many of these truths they taught only by word of mouth. These teachings were handed down from mouth to mouth like an inheritance. This holy inheritance we call *Tradition.* Tradition, therefore, also comes from God; it contains the revelations of God. Consequently we must reverence and honor and obey it.

8. Do you believe, that the Holy Ghost according to Christ's promises will remain with the Church to the end of time and keep it in all truth?

This is no longer new to you. With what words did Christ promise the Holy Ghost to His Church.—"I will ask the Father and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you forever, the

Spirit of truth" (John xv, 16). And again: "The Spirit of truth will teach you all truth" (John xvi, 13). That is Christ's word and His word is truth. We believe, that the Holy Ghost is still with the Church and that He is the great Teacher of the Church.

9. Do you believe, that the Church alone has the right to decide about the right interpretation (explanation) of the Holy Scriptures and about disputes in matters of Faith?

Already in the days of the Apostles there was a dispute in matters of Faith. Who decided? — The Apostles held a council and Peter spoke: "It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us: Thus must every Christian believe." Peter did that in the name and by the authority of Christ.—Later on Luther began to dispute in the Church. He interpreted (explained) the Holy Scriptures simply according to his own mind and made a new Faith for himself. Who decided the dispute? You already know that.—The Church is the Teacher of Faith; she alone can rightly interpret the Holy Scriptures and decide questions of Faith and morals.

10. Do you believe, that there are seven Holy Sacraments which Jesus Christ instituted for the salvation of the faithful?

Seven little fountains of grace flow in our Church, seven Holy Sacraments. In each of these Sacraments there is the power of the Blood of Christ. All seven Sacraments Jesus gave to us, in order that in them we might obtain salvation. Thus do we Catholics believe. But there are other Christians, who believe differently. What did Luther teach about the Sacraments?

11. Do you believe, that through the Holy Sacrament of Confirmation is given to you the special grace of the Holy Ghost, in order to preserve steadfastly the Faith?

That was the gift of Pentecost for the Apostles. That also is the special gift of Confirmation: Through

the Holy Ghost you become strong in the Faith and the life of Faith. Just think of the Japanese children, of Aquilina.

12. Do you believe, that to obtain salvation it is also necessary to keep the Commandments?

Simply to believe is not enough for Heaven; a Christian must also live according to the Faith. You know the story of the rich young man. He asked: "Master, what must I do to obtain life everlasting?" Jesus answered: "If thou wilt enter life, keep the Commandments." Do you see? That is the way to Heaven: Keep the Commandments!

These are the twelve questions about Faith. To these are added five more questions concerning the life of Christian Faith. Those renewing the baptismal vows answer earnestly and firmly to each question: *"We do solemnly promise."*

13. Do you solemnly promise according to Christ's command and example to love God above all things and your neighbor as yourselves?

You know the great Commandment.—The kernel of the Commandment is: Love God above all things and thy neighbor as thyself! Whoever does that, does all things; whoever keeps this Commandment keeps all the Commandments. But do you know what that means: To love God above all things? You must love God more than father and mother, brother and sister, money and possessions, yes more than life—then you are perfect Christians.

14. Do you solemnly promise with the help of the Holy Ghost to fulfil faithfully in all things the words of God and His Holy Church, not to waver in the Faith, not to depart from the regulations of salvation, no matter what the danger, the advantage or the profit?

A good child listens to the word of its father and mother. A good Christian obeys the word of God, his Father, and the word of his holy Mother, the Church.

A good Christian does not waver in the Faith like a weak reed in the wind. A good Christian does not depart from the ways of eternal salvation, but rather holds faithfully to what God and the Church prescribe for him. But whoever desires to be a good Christian, is exposed to many dangers. Not only abuse and ridicule must he suffer, perhaps also loss of money and possessions and honor. Or some advantage is promised him—a good salary, a good position, a good business—if he will only become unfaithful to his Faith; or the attempt is made to get him to leave the right path by enjoyment—pleasure, luxury. A good Christian will not allow himself to be deceived by such tinsel; he will not allow himself to be misled, but rather thinks to himself: My Faith and a good conscience are dearer to me.

15. Do you solemnly promise, with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, to resist with the courage of the holy Apostles and Martyrs, of the holy Virgins and Confessors, all attacks against your Faith, all temptations of the world and all the seducements of wicked pleasure?

You are to become soldiers of Christ. In the life of a Christian there are many sacrifices and battles. When you get bigger, wicked Christians will attack your Faith and ridicule you; the sinful pleasures of the world will blind your young hearts; wicked pleasure will flare up in your hearts like a sinister hellish fire. All these attacks against your Faith, all temptations of the world and all allurements of wicked pleasure you are to resist courageously. When all these things come, think of the holy Apostles—Peter, Paul, James; think of the holy Martyrs—Stephen, Lawrence; think of the holy Confessors—Augustine, Aloysius. They are glorious models. Like them you ought to be courageous soldiers of Christ.

16. Do you solemnly promise to live and die as Catholic Christians?

This question sums up again briefly all that we have said. A person that is confirmed—is a perfect Christian! To live and to die as a Catholic—upon that eternal life depends! But you cannot do that alone. For that you need strength from above; but you ought to have in your hearts a holy and an ardent desire for the Holy Ghost. Therefore for the last time the question is asked:

17. Do you desire the co-operation of the Holy Ghost and His graces, in order to be able to fulfill these vows and promises?

All answer: *"We do so desire."* To this is added a final blessing:

"Well then, may God, the Almighty, fulfill your desire; may He graciously accept your profession, your resolutions and vows; may He strengthen them by bestowing His Holy Spirit. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

That is your solemn promise. Now you ought to read it over again and again, so that all might know what they promise before God and the whole congregation. But also ask the Holy Spirit each day to help you to be able to keep your promise faithfully until death.

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II.
CONFIRMATION

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INTRODUCTION.

Dear children, it is not so very long since you made your First Holy Communion. Jesus, the Supreme and the All-Holy One, took up His abode with you. Soon the Holy Spirit, too, will come into your hearts—in Holy Confirmation. The Holy Ghost is God like the Father and the Son. The day of your Confirmation is, therefore, a great day of grace. Consequently you ought to prepare yourselves now with all zeal. But how should you prepare yourselves?

1) *To pray* is the first thing necessary. We ought to pray humbly for every grace, and therefore also for the grace of Confirmation. Recite a good morning and evening prayer each day.

2) Go to *Holy Mass* every day, if at all possible. You already know—Holy Mass is particularly also a sacrifice of petition. In it Jesus prays with and for us to His heavenly Father. Jesus once said: "I will ask the Father and He shall send you the Holy Spirit." Jesus will pray for you.

3) Make a *visit to Jesus* in the afternoon. Recite at that time the prayers marked: "Visit to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament."

4) Each day make some little *sacrifice:* some little act of self-denial in eating or drinking, some mortification with the eyes, with the ears, with the tongue.—

5) But especially keep *your hearts pure;* for a heavenly Guest is to take up His abode with you. The purer your hearts, the richer will be the graces of Confirmation.

If you prepare yourselves in that way, the day of your Confirmation will be for you a day of grace. But you need the graces of Holy Confirmation very much; for many dangers threaten you. The wicked children of the world want to seduce you; the devil would like to delude you; wicked concupiscence in your hearts would like to seduce you. How can you then preserve

your young hearts pure from the filthy stain of sin? Alone that is impossible; the Holy Ghost must strengthen you for that in Confirmation.

LESSON VII.

(Supplementary)

The Holy Ghost in the Soul.

Catechetical Unit:

1) Is the Holy Ghost still sent at the present time? (Deharbe.)
2) What work does the Holy Ghost perform on the soul? (Deharbe.)
3) How long does the Holy Ghost remain in the soul? (Deharbe.)

(N. B. As a remote preparation for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation the catechist ought first to review the doctrine of the Church on the Holy Ghost, as contained in the Apostles' Creed, particularly concerning the mission of the Spirit as regards the threefold function of teaching, sanctifying and ruling. Then the catechist should enlighten the children on the mission of the Holy Ghost to the soul of the individual Christian. The following lesson aims at supplementing what is wanting in the Baltimore Catechism.)

Preparation. Dear children, Confirmation is the Sacrament of the Holy Ghost. If you wish to understand Confirmation correctly, you must learn to know the Holy Ghost properly. Many Christians do not know Him; the Holy Ghost is for them an "unknown God." But neither do you know too much about Him. Therefore we must first learn about the Holy Ghost. We hear of Him in the eighth article of the Apostles' Creed: "I believe in the Holy Ghost." The Holy Ghost is God. That is the first truth, which we believe about Him. Let us review this doctrine. *(Question the pupils briefly on this matter. Cf. our volume: "The Creed Explained.")*—Who is the Holy Ghost? Is He equal to the Father and the Son? — Why? — From whom does the Holy Ghost proceed?—How did the

Holy Ghost come down upon the Apostles?—When did He come down?—Who sent the Holy Ghost?—

The Holy Ghost is especially in the Catholic Church, the great family of Christians, that is spread over the whole wide world. On Pentecost the young Church of Christ was assembled in a room in Jerusalem: Peter—the Head, the other Apostles—the Bishops, and the other disciples—the Faithful. However, the young Church still lacked the right life. When God made the first man, He formed and fashioned a body out of the earth. Then He breathed into the face of that body the breath of life. Something very much the same occurred on Pentecost: The Holy Ghost breathed the breath of life into the young Church of Christ. Ever since that time the Holy Ghost lives and works in the Church of Jesus Christ. Let us review this teaching. *(Question the pupils briefly on this doctrine. Cf. our volume: "The Creed Explained.")*—Why did Christ send the Holy Ghost?—How does the Holy Ghost teach the Church?—How does the Holy Ghost sanctify the Church?—How does the Holy Ghost rule the Church?—Will the Holy Ghost abide with the Church forever?—

In the rumbling of a storm the Spirit of God came down on Pentecost. Quickly the doctrines of Christ spread into all countries. The Church, in the beginning merely a little insignficant plant, soon became like a great and flourishing tree in the beautiful month of May. Numberless Saints were the blossoms on the tree of the Church. Through whom did this happen?—It was the work of the Holy Ghost.

Wonderful indeed is the work of the Holy Ghost in the Church. But every pure heart of man is a little church of God. The Holy Ghost dwells and works also in every pure heart of man in a very wonderful manner as the Dispenser of grace.

Aim. That is what I must show you today in detail: *the wondrous working of the Holy Ghost in the soul.* We see that very well in the case of the Apostles.

Presentation. Let us first relate again very briefly the story of the great miracle of Pentecost.—*(The catechist might have one of the children tell the story in his own words. At the same time show the pupils a large picture of the Pentecost scene.)*

Explanation. 1. The descent of the Spirit of God on Pentecost was public and clearly visible to the great crowds, that had gathered in the Holy City. No one could deny it; for everyone heard the rumbling of the mighty wind, saw the tongues of fire and was astonished at the courage and the marvelous preaching of the Apostles. But that is not the last time that the Holy Ghost has come into the world. He still comes at the present time, and He will continue to come to the end of time. "Know you not," says St. Paul to the Corinthians, who had received sanctifying grace in Baptism, "that you are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (I Cor. iii, 16). Yes, when original sin was taken away from your souls in Holy Baptism, the Spirit of God Himself entered your souls with sanctifying grace and took up His abode within you. If you fell into mortal sin later on and were pardoned again by the absolution of the priest in Penance, or by an act of perfect contrition, the Holy Ghost was sent to you again to enrich your soul with sanctifying grace and to make your hearts His Tabernacle. How wonderful! With sanctifying grace we receive not only a gift of the Holy Ghost, but the Holy Ghost Himself, so that He dwells in our hearts as in His temple. But we do not, of course, see Him coming, for all this takes place quietly and invisibly, but surely nevertheless. Remember then: **The Holy Ghost is still sent at the present time in an invisible manner, as often as He enters with His sanctifying grace into our souls, in order to dwell there.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

2. The tongues of fire that appeared over the heads of the disciples of Christ on Pentecost, were symbols

of the Holy Ghost. They tell us what took place in the Apostles. But tell me first, how does fire work? Fire enlightens; fire purifies; fire warms; fire consumes. In a similar manner did the Holy Ghost work in the hearts of the Apostles.

a) Fire enlightens. The Holy Ghost enlightened the Apostles. You know, that the Apostles were very simple, uneducated men; they had not learned much. They did indeed converse more than three years with Jesus, but often enough they did not understand the teachings of their Divine Master. Just one example. After the Last Supper Jesus said in His wonderfully beautiful farewell speech: "In My Father's house there are many mansions, and I go to prepare a place for you. And whither I go you know, and the way you know." (John xiv, 2s). Then Thomas replied: "Lord we know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way?" (John xiv, 5). But Philip said: "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." Jesus said to him: "So long a time have I been with you, and you know not Me?" (John xiv, 9). Do you see? So hard of understanding were the disciples. And these ignorant Apostles were to teach all nations.

Soon came the feast of Pentecost. All were filled with the Holy Ghost. Suddenly they were as changed men. At once they began to teach and to speak in strange tongues. Peter immediately preached an impressive sermon, so that the hearts of all were moved; and yet he had never learned how to preach. Do you see the light of the Holy Ghost? He enlightened the Apostles interiorly. But the eyes of the Jews were also opened; they recognized the truth and three thousand were baptized. **The Holy Ghost enlightens the soul.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

b) Fire purifies. Gold is purified in fire. The Holy Ghost purified and sanctified the Apostles. And that was necessary. The disciples always imagined and dreamed that Jesus would establish a great kingdom of the Jews. Each one wanted to be the first in the

new kingdom of the Messias. They oftentimes quarrelled about that just as little children. And besides that they were still full of faults and weaknesses and far from being holy. Just think of how deeply Peter fell. Thomas was filled with doubts and did not want to believe at all that Christ was arisen. Then the feast of Pentecost came and they were filled with the Holy Ghost. Suddenly everything was changed; no jealousy any more, no quarrelling, no unkind conduct; they were made holy through the Holy Spirit. Now they followed Jesus faithfully, until they became perfect Saints in Heaven. **The Holy Ghost sanctifies the soul, wherefore He is called the Sanctifier.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

c) Fire warms and strengthens. The Holy Ghost warmed and strengthened the Apostles interiorly. How so? Just recall the night of Jesus' Passion. Jesus was taken prisoner in the Garden of Olives and bound. Then the Apostles ran away for fear and terror. Only Peter followed at a distance. But what happened? But a few hours before he had sworn: "Lord, I am ready to go with Thee to death." And now he fears the talk of a maid-servant and denies his Divine Master three times in turn. What a coward! The next day Jesus was led away to death. And His disciples? All, even to John, deserted Him. They locked themselves in a room for fear of the Jews. And these Apostles, as weak as reeds, were to conquer the world for Christ. They were to remain firm in every battle and storm.

But now just look at the Apostles on Pentecost. Unterrified and despising death they appeared before the Jews, that had murdered God. Peter preached for them a severe sermon of condemnation: "You have crucified and killed Christ!" Not one of them knows fear any more; all are ready to die for Christ. The first one was James the Elder. He was attacked during a sermon. A Pharisee threw a rope about his neck and dragged him before King Herod. He wanted

to do a favor to the Jews and spoke the death sentence. James spoke only the words: "Thanks be to God." Soon the turn came to the others, too, to die; joyfully they all went to death. Whence did they get the strength? **The Holy Ghost strengthens the soul.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

d) Fire consumes. The Holy Ghost consumed in the Apostles all sadness and comforted them. Jesus had foretold to His disciples: "I leave the world and go to the Father." The disciples became very sad over that; they could not get rid of the gloomy thought: What is to happen to us when the Master is no longer with us? But Jesus foretold even more: "They will put you out of the synagogues; yea, the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he hath done a service to God" (John xvi, 2). That happened very soon. As upon the Divine Master, so, also, upon His disciples all sorts of evils were inflicted. But in the midst of all their sufferings and trials they remained joyful and comforted. Yes, St. Paul once said: "I am filled with comfort; I exceedingly abound with joy in all our tribulation" (II Cor. vii, 4). Whence this comfort and this joy? The Comforter was in their hearts; He changed sadness into consolation, sorrow into joy. **The Holy Ghost comforts the soul, wherefore He is also called the Comforter.** *(Repeat together; use the blockboard.)*

3. On Pentecost the Holy Ghost took His abode in the Apostles. How long did He remain with them? The Holy Ghost never left them; for they always remained in the grace and the love of God. As long as grace is in the soul, so long is the Holy Ghost in the soul. But it is also possible to drive out the Holy Ghost from the soul. Just *one* mortal sin and the Holy Ghost departs in sadness from the soul. What a change! What a misfortune! Therefore, we ought to fear mortal sin more than death. St. Paul once admonished the Christians of his time: "Extinguish not the Spirit." (Thess. v, 19). Aand again: "Grieve not

the Holy Spirit of God" (Eph. iv, 30). The Holy Ghost is grieved by every venial sin; He is extinguished by every mortal sin. **The Holy Ghost remains in the soul as long as the soul is free from any grievous sin.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

1. Holy Ghost comes and dwells in the soul invisibly —with sanctifying grace.
2. Fire — the Holy Ghost
   a) enlightens, — 1) enlightens the soul;
   b) purifies, — 2) sanctifies the soul;
   c) warms, — 3) strengthens the soul;
   d) consumes, — 4) comforts the soul.
3. Mortal sin drives out the Holy Ghost from the soul.

Synthesis. We owe all graces to Jesus and to the Holy Ghost. Here it is just like in a family. The father earns the daily bread for the children and the mother gives the bread to the children. Jesus earned all grace for us, the Holy Ghost distributes or dispenses grace to us. Through whom are the fruits or the graces of the Divine Redemption dispensed? Is the Holy Ghost still sent to us at the present time? How does the Holy Ghost work in the soul? What graces does the Holy Ghost give to the soul? How long does the Holy Ghost remain in the soul? *(Have the pupils read the answers from the blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. *The Holy Ghost enlightens the soul.* Before the class we invoked the Holy Ghost. Why? If the Holy Ghost helps us with His grace, it is much easier to learn. The Holy Ghost is really our teacher in religion. Without the Holy Ghost all my talking is fruitless. I can only teach you religion, but I cannot give you religion. Do you now see, how we all need the light of grace from the Holy Ghost? In the church you see over the pulpit the dove as the symbol of the Holy Ghost. Each time before the sermon the priest

calls upon the Holy Ghost. Why does he do that? Without the Holy Ghost the word of God enters into the ears only, but not into the heart. But if the Holy Ghost co-operates, the sermon touches the heart of the people just as it did in the case of the Jews on Pentecost. What do we do each time before Confession? We pray humbly for the light of grace from the Holy Ghost: "Come, Holy Ghost!"

2. *The Holy Ghost sanctifies the soul.* When were you sanctified? In Baptism the Holy Ghost decorated you with the heavenly garment of sanctifying grace and raised you to the dignity of children of God; yes, He consecrated you to be His living temples. But perhaps you lost the life of grace. The Holy Ghost gave it to you again in the Sacrament of Penance. For it is He that purifies the heart from sins. He gave you your First Holy Communion and wants to give you the wonderful heavenly bread often, as often as possible. The Holy Ghost wishes to make Saints of you. And if some day you do become Saints in Heaven, you must say: "Through the grace of the Holy Ghost I am, what I am." Do you see? What gratitude do you not owe to the good Holy Spirit of God?

3. *The Holy Ghost strengthens the soul.* How strong the Holy Ghost makes a person with His grace you see, especially in the Holy Martyrs. In Japan the Christians were once persecuted and tortured frightfully. Many Christian children were commanded to sacrifice to the idols. They refused. The torturers pulled off the skin from the hands of these children before the eyes of their parents and laid glowing coals on their little hands. The children remained steadfast, even a five year old child. A girl was about to be burned to death. She bowed down and fiery coals were laid upon her head like a martyr's crown. Who made these weak children so strong? The Holy Ghost wants to make you strong also in the Sacraments of Confirmation.

4. *The Holy Ghost comforts the soul.* Who needs the Holy Ghost, especially as a Comforter? The poor sick and old people. Life is full of suffering and woe. Each day has its trial. Have you, perhaps, also noticed that? All will some time experience that. To be sick, poor, despised, tempted—that is not easy; then comfort and consolation are necessary. But the Holy Ghost can make everything easy for us. If He comforts us, the bitter will become sweet for us and suffering a joy. St. Theresa prayed in her sufferings: "Oh God! more suffering, more suffering." Thus she could pray only in the Holy Ghost. Be sure not to forget the Comforter! He is your best friend, but a much forgotten and misunderstood friend.

LESSON VIII.

Confirmation—A Sacrament

Catechetical Unit:

1) Who teaches us that the Sacrament of Confirmation was instituted by Christ? (Deharbe.)
2) What is Confirmation? L. XV, Q. 166.
3) Who is capable of receiving Confirmation? (Deharbe.)
4) Who administers Confirmation? L. XV, Q. 167.

Preparation. Dear children, we have compared the Holy Ghost with the light of the sun. Light comes from the sun and the sun's rays. In a similar manner the Holy Ghost comes, or proceeds, from the Father and the Son from all eternity. The sun pours its rays over the earth. In a like manner the Holy Ghost pours the rays of His grace over the Church and into the hearts of men. Let us review this teaching. *(Question the pupils briefly on the foregoing lesson.)* When was the first Holy Confirmation? Pentecost was the first great day of Confirmation; the Apostles were the first ones to be confirmed. From whom did they receive Confirmation? Before that they were as weak as reeds;

after that strong as oaks (strong in the Faith and in the life of Faith). The Holy Ghost did that. Now, you already know what Confirmation is: Confirmation is the Sacrament which makes one strong through the Holy Ghost. To confirm means to makes one strong. But I must tell you more about this.

Aim. First I shall show you: *Confirmation is a true Sacrament.* There are Christians who do not believe that—the Protestants. Luther invented this false Faith. He claimed: Confirmation is not a Sacrament. Let us see who is right. You have heard: The Holy Ghost teaches the Church. Through whom does the Holy Ghost teach in the Church? When the Pope and the Bishops come together and deliberate about matters of Faith, we have a council of the Church (a general council). Once there was a great council of the Church gathered at the city of Trent in southern Tyrol. Do you also know what a Father of the Church is? Fathers of the Church are learned and holy men, who lived in the early days of the Church; they have written splendid books about the Christian Faith. The Holy Ghost helped them to do that, by enlightening their minds. Augustine and Jerome are Fathers of the Church. *(The catechist might show the children a picture of a Father of the Church, over whose head the figure of a dove is hovering.)*

Presentation. It is now four hundred years since Luther began the dispute in the Church and led many astray in the Faith. The Holy Father wanted to restore peace again and lead the strayed sheep back to the true Faith. Therefore, he called together a council of the Church at Trent.

Let us now, in spirit, enter into a great hall. We find the delegates of the Pope and many Bishops gathered together, taking counsel on the questions, which are being disputed. They are just deliberating about Holy Confirmation—on the third of March, 1547. A big book lies open—the Sacred Scriptures or the Bible.

Passages are read from it concerning Holy Confirmation. They are found in the Acts of the Apostles (vii, 14-17): "Philip, (the deacon), going down to the city of Samaria, preached Christ unto them; he also cured many that were sick. Therefore, many believed in Christ and were baptized. There was, therefore, great joy in the city. Now when the Apostles, who were in Jerusalem, had heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John. And when they were come into the city, they prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. For He was not yet come upon any of them; but they were only baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost."

All the Bishops heard what the Holy Scriptures narrate. But other books were also at hand—written by the Holy Fathers of the Church. These also were opened and passages read from them concerning what they had written of Holy Confirmation. Finally it was solemnly defined: "Confirmation is a true Sacrament of Jesus Christ. Only the Bishop has the power of confirming. However, a priest may also confirm with the special power of the Pope." Thereupon the Holy Father confirmed this teaching by his deciding word. Thus did the council of Trent proceed.

Explanation. 1. You already know: Protestants believe in only two Sacraments—Baptism and the Lord's Supper. They do not want to have anything to do with the other five Sacraments. Luther rejected them. The Church could not tolerate that. So what happened? What did the council of Trent solemnly declare? Confirmation is a true Sacrament. Why is that the truth? The Holy Ghost has spoken and taught through the council of the Church. He is the Spirit of truth. Jesus Himself has said so: "The Spirit of truth will teach you all truth" (John xvi, 13). Therefore the truth remains: Confirmation is a true Sacrament. *The Church* proposes that for our Faith; there-

fore it is true. O Jesus, we believe, that Thou hast given us the Sacrament of Confirmation. We thank Thee for this gift of God.

2. But the Church has also proven, that Confirmation is a Sacrament. Where is mention made of that? Peter and John undertook a journey into Samaria, in order to confirm. There they laid hands upon those that were baptized, and prayed over them and called down the Holy Ghost upon them. But, tell me, how came the Apostles to do that? Did they do that of themselves? That cannot be; it would have been without effect. Without a doubt Christ had solemnly commanded them: Impose hands upon those baptized and pray over them; then they will receive the Holy Ghost.

In *Bible History* it is also narrated how St. Paul administered Confirmation. In the course of his missionary journeys he came into the city of Ephesus. There he found twelve men, who believed in Christ. He asked them: "Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed?" He meant, are you baptized? The men looked at him in surprise and said: "We have not so much as heard whether there be a Holy Ghost." Paul was astonished, that Christians had not heard of the Holy Ghost, and asked them: "In what, then, were you baptized?" Now the truth came out. They replied: "In John's baptism." Is that the Christian Baptism? That was only the preparation for Christian Baptism. Then Paul taught them and baptized those that believed and imposed hands upon them. Then it is narrated expressly: "And when Paul had imposed hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came upon them" (Acts of Ap. xix, 6). That was Confirmation.

Now you see, even more clearly, that the Church was right, when she taught: Confirmation is a true Sacrament. The teaching of the Church and the teaching of Holy Scripture agree perfectly; both teach the very same truth.

3. Upon what else did the Church base her teaching concerning Confirmation? The holy Father of the Church, Augustine, says expressly: "The Sacrament of Chrism (Confirmation) is just as holy as Baptism." Now surely Baptism is a true Sacrament. Then Confirmation must also be a Sacrament. The holy Father of the Church, Jerome, once wrote: "Do you not know that it is the custom of the Church to impose hands upon those baptized, in order that thus the Holy Ghost might be called down? You ask where it is written? In the Acts of the Apostles. But even if Sacred Scripture supplied no authority (for the custom), the agreement of the whole world would give it the force of a command" (Dial, adv. Lucif. n. 9).

There you see again: *The holy Fathers,* too, teach just as the Church and the Sacred Scriptures. The teaching of the Church, the teaching of the Bible and the teaching of the Fathers agree: Confirmation is a true Sacrament of Jesus Christ. Let us remember that. Who, then, instituted Confirmation? *Our Lord Jesus Christ, has instituted Confirmation as the infallible Catholic Church teaches in accordance with the Holy Scriptures, and with the doctrine of the holy Fathers. (Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

4. Now tell me, how did Peter and John confirm? Philip first baptized those that believed; then the Apostles laid hands upon those newly baptized and prayed over them—"and they received the Holy Ghost." The laying on of hands and the prayer of the Apostles were things, that could be seen and heard. They were the *outward signs* of the Sacrament. (Later on was added the anointing with oil.) Through that outward sign those baptized were made strong in the Christian Faith and the Christian life. The Holy Ghost made them perfect Christians and soldiers in the army of Jesus Christ. Let us remember this: **Confirmation is a Sacrament, through which we receive the Holy Ghost to make us strong and**

perfect Christians and soldiers of Jesus Christ. *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* 5. *Every one who is baptized is capable of receiving Confirmation. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

6. The deacon Philip baptized the faithful in Samaria. Why did he not confirm them? He could not do that; he had no power for that. Only the Apostles could confirm, because they were Bishops. The holy council of the Church, the council of Trent, has declared expressly: "Only Bishops have the power to confirm." In what case can a simple priest confirm? The council teaches further: "If the Pope grants him the power." **The Bishop is the ordinary minister of Confirmation.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

Confirmation—a Sacrament:

1. Church, Holy Scriptures, holy Fathers—agree in this.
2. Confirmation—Sacrament that makes us strong in the Holy Ghost; perfect Christians; soldiers of Jesus Christ.
3. Baptized Christians—may be confirmed.
4. Power of confirming—Bishops (priests—when?)

Synthesis. Confirmation is a Sacrament of Jesus Christ. That is absolutely certain. We just saw that. Who instituted the holy Sacrament of Confirmation? When did the Church solemnly define this teaching? What does the Bible say of Confirmation? What is Confirmation? Who can be confirmed? Who can confirm? *(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. You know from history the Apostle of Germany, St. Boniface. The venerable Bishop was already seventy-five years old and still he would not allow himself any rest. Untiringly did he pursue his work of converting the heathen people of Frisia. On the solemn feast of Pentecost—on the fifth of June,

755—he was about to administer Holy Confirmation to the newly converted in an open field. A horde of half-savage pagans attacked him; Boniface and fifty-two Christians were murdered. Do you see? He died a Martyr for Holy Confirmation; with his blood he sealed this truth: Confirmation is a true Sacrament.

2. In Samaria all were filled with joy, when Peter and John came to confirm. With what reverence must not those about to be confirmed have received the Apostles! Now the Bishops have the dignity of the Apostles. Soon our Right Reverend Chief Shepherd will come. That is a day of honor and a day of joy for the whole parish, but particularly for you, who are soon to be confirmed. The Bishop will impose hands upon you and pray for you, and you will receive the Holy Ghost. Rejoice and be glad! But prepare yourselves also for that event with all zeal. Pray from this day forward, each time that you visit the Blessed Sacrament, seven Our Fathers for the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and add this little petition:

"Come, Holy Ghost, Creator blest,
And in our hearts take up Thy rest;
Come with Thy grace and heavenly aid,
To fill the hearts which Thou hast made."

LESSON IX.

The Rite of Confirmation.

Catechetical Unit:

1) What is holy chrism? L. XV, Q. 169.
2) How does the Bishop give Confirmation? L. XV, Q. 168.
3) What does the Bishop say in anointing the person he confirms? L. XV, Q. 170.
4) What is meant by anointing the forehead with chrism in the form of a cross? L. XV, Q. 171.
5) Why does the Bishop give the person he confirms a slight blow on the cheek? L. XV, Q. 172.

Preparation. Dear children, in the old Christian ages the person baptized generally received three Sacraments at once — Baptism, Confirmation and Communion. We read that in an old writing (of Tertullian) of the second century: "The flesh is washed off, in order that the soul may be cleansed; the flesh is overshadowed by the imposition of hands, in order that the soul may be illuminated by the Holy Ghost; the flesh is fed with the Body and Blood of Christ, in order that the soul may be nourished by God" (De bap. c. 7). Do you see? Already then there was Confirmation. But the traces of Confirmation go back even farther—to the Apostles and Christ. How were the Apostles confirmed? How did Peter and John confirm? How did St. Paul confirm?—*(Question the pupils briefly on the preceding lesson.)*

Formerly this Sacrament was called "the imposition of hands," "the mystery of the Holy Ghost," "the anointing" (or unction). Why these names? The Christians also said for short "chrism," because the one to be confirmed was anointed with chrism. By chrism we understand a mixture of oil and balsam. Whence comes the oil? the balsam? The oil is made from pressed olives; the balsam is a resin of sweet odor, that flows from certain plants. Chrism is specially consecrated by the Bishop on Holy Thursday. The consecration is particularly solemn. During the consecration of the chrism the Bishop and priests bend the knee and pray: "Hail, holy chrism!" Our Catechism says: **Holy chrism is a mixture of olive oil and balsam consecrated by the Bishop.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the Explanation.)*

Aim. Now I am going to describe for you briefly: *how the Bishop confirms—therefore, the rite of Confirmation.*

Presentation. The priests receive the Bishop at the door of the Church. The bells ring, the organ peals forth, the Bishop enters solemnly into the church. Meanwhile the choir sings: "Ecce sacerdos magnus—Behold the High Priest!" The priests accompany the Bishop to the high altar. There he clothes himself with the episcopal vestments. Then Holy Mass begins. The Mass is offered especially for those about to be confirmed. All ought, therefore, to unite themselves with the Bishop (or priests) and pray and sing like the Angels. (Often, however, the Bishop confirms in the afternoon or evening.) A short instruction on Confirmation follows the Mass. They are the final words of counsel to those about to be confirmed. This is the *preliminary ceremony. (Use the blackboard.)*

Now the *principal ceremony* begins. *(Use the blackboard.)* All that are about to be confirmed kneel down and fold their hands; for the Bishop solemnly invokes the Holy Ghost. He prays as follows: "May the Holy Ghost come down upon you and the power of the Most High preserve you from sins. Amen." Then the Bishop extends his hands over those to be confirmed, and prays: "Let us pray! Almighty, eternal God, Thou hast in Thy grace regenerated these Thy servants in water and the Holy Ghost, Thou hast given them remission of all sins: now pour forth over them Thy Holy Spirit, the Comforter, with His sevenfold gift. Amen. The Spirit of wisdom and understanding. Amen. The Spirit of counsel and fortitude. Amen. The Spirit of knowledge and piety. Amen. Fill them with the Spirit of Thy fear and sign them with the sign of the cross of Christ unto eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reignest in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, from eternity to eternity. Amen."

Now the great moment is come. The Bishop passes in turn from one to the other of those to be confirmed. The sponsor stands behind the person, for whom he is

acting as sponsor, and places his right hand on the right shoulder of the one to be confirmed. But the Bishop lays his right hand on the head of the person he is confirming, anoints the forehead with holy chrism, and says: "Joseph (Mary), I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Then the Bishop gives the person confirmed a slight blow on the cheek and says at the same time: "Peace be with thee." At this moment the person confirmed receives the gift of Pentecost.

But Confirmation is not over yet. After all the children have been confirmed, there follows a solemn concluding prayer. (The Bishop prays: "Confirm, O Lord, what Thou hast effected in us from Thy holy temple, which is in Jerusalem. Glory be to the Father, etc. Let us pray! O God, Thou hast given to Thy Apostles the Holy Spirit, and hast willed, that through them and their successors the Holy Ghost should come down into the hearts of those, whose forehead we have anointed with holy chrism, and perfect them to become temples of Thy glory.") Then the Bishop blesses those that have received Confirmation: "May the Lord bless you from Sion, so that you may see the blessings of Jerusalem all the days of your life, and have eternal life. Amen." In gratitude all sing together solemnly: "Holy God, we praise Thy name!" This is the *concluding ceremony. (Use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

1. Holy Chrism—olive oil and balsam.

I. Preliminary ceremony

1. Entry of the Bishop:
2. Mass for those to be confirmed;
3. Instruction on Confirmation.

II. Principal ceremony

4. Invocation of the Holy Ghost;

5. Prayer for the seven gifts of the Spirit;
6. Imposition of the hand, anointing with holy chrism, prayer, sign of the cross;
7. Blow on the cheek.

III. Concluding ceremony

8. Concluding prayer and blessing;
9. "Holy God."

Explanation. You do not, of course, as yet understand everything perfectly. I must explain for you some points a little more in detail.

1. When Peter and John made their first journey into Samaria to confirm, "they prayed over the faithful, that they might receive the Holy Ghost." The Bishop still does the same thing. Extending his hands over those about to be confirmed, he prays, in order that they may receive the Holy Ghost. How does he pray? "May the Holy Spirit descend upon you." What else does the Bishop pray for especially? The seven gifts of the Holy Ghost are a Confirmation gift from the Holy Ghost. This invocation of the Holy Ghost is the preliminary ceremony. Our Catechism says: **The Bishop extends his hands over those who are to be confirmed, and prays that they may receive the Holy Ghost.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see below just above the synthesis.)*

2. Now occurs the act of Confirmation, properly so called. The Bishop lays his right hand on the head of the one to be confirmed. What is the meaning of this ceremony? On Pentecost firey tongues were seen floating over the heads of Christ's disciples. At that moment the Apostles were filled with the Holy Ghost. Now the hand of the Bishop rests over the head of each one to be confirmed. At that moment the power of the Holy Spirit streams into the soul of the person confirmed. The *imposition of the hand,* therefore, signifies the conferring, or the giving, of the Holy Ghost *(Use the blackboard.)*

3. While the Bishop imposes his hand, as our Catechism says, **he anoints the forehead of each one with holy chrism.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* This ceremony has a beautiful meaning. There is *oil* in the chrism. Oil is a symbol of power and strength. It spreads itself readily and penetrates the body, making it soft and flexible, and easy to move. In the old days oil was much used by athletes in preparing themselves for the conflict, which was to secure for them the coveted prize. Hence it is a perfect image of the grace conferred in Confirmation, which prepares the Christian athlete for a contest, the prize of which is life eternal. Consequently the one to be confirmed is anointed with oil, in order that he may be made strong, confirmed, interiorly in the Holy Ghost. Therefore, the Bishop says: "I confirm (strengthen) thee with the chrism of salvation." In the chrism there is also *balsam.* That, too, has its meaning. Balsam protects against corruption; therefore, formerly people liked to embalm corpses, so that they would be preserved against corruption. Hence balsom symbolizes the grace of Confirmation. The soul of the person confirmed ought to remain preserved from the corruption of sin; for sin grieves the Holy Ghost and drives Him from the soul. Balsam is also fragrant, emits a pleasing odor. Thus, too, ought the soul of the one confirmed to be fragrant, virtuous, so that God and men may be pleased with it, so that it may become "the good odor of Christ unto God" *(Use the blackboard.)*

4. The Bishop anoints the forehead of each one with holy chrism—*in the form of a cross.* What words does he say at the same time? "I sign thee with the sign of the cross." The sign of the cross is significant. The soldier carries the insignia of his regiment on his helmet, or cap. By it one knows at once that he is in the service of his country. The sign of the cross on the forehead of the one confirmed tells us: Thou art in the service of the Most High King, of the Crucified; thou art a soldier of Christ. The sol-

dier is proud of the insignia of his country. So, too, the person confirmed ought never to be ashamed of the cross. The one confirmed ought to consider it a matter of honor and conscience, to profess always and everywhere without fear his Faith in Jesus Christ, the Crucified One. For to be a good Christian and to openly profess one's Faith—that is not a disgrace; but it is a disgrace to be ashamed of one's Faith. Remember then: **By anointing the forehead with chrism in the form of a cross, is meant, that the Christian who is confirmed must openly profess and practice his Faith, never be ashamed of it, and rather die than deny it.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

5. Now, let us repeat together the entire answer as it is in our Catechism: **In anointing the person he confirms the Bishop says: I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.**

6. It will perhaps seem strange to you, that the Bishop should give a *blow on the cheek* to the one he has confirmed. You know, that when Jesus stood before the High Court, a servant gave Him a blow on the cheek. Christ could, with one word, yes, with a breath of His mouth, have struck this bold man to the earth. But no; patiently He bore this shocking insult. The blow on the cheek at Confirmation is to remind you of this. It should be for the person confirmed a reminder: For love of Jesus, for His name's sake, you ought patiently to bear all insults, yes even death itself. **The Bishop gives the person he confirms a slight blow on the cheek, to put him in mind that he must be ready to suffer everything, even death, for the sake of Christ.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

1. Bishop extends his hands—prays for the descent of the Holy Ghost.
2. Imposition of the hand—giving the Spirit.

3. Anointing
   oil—strength;
   balsam—virtues.
4. Sign of the cross—profess Faith in Christ.
5. Blow on the cheek—bear everything for Christ.

Synthesis. Now you know the rite of Confirmation, and you also understand the meaning of the ceremonies. How does the Bishop confirm? What is the meaning of the imposing of the hand? of the unction? What is the meaning of the olive oil? Of the balsam? Why does the Bishop make the sign of the cross on the forehead of the person he confirms? Why does the Bishop give a slight blow on the cheek of the one he has confirmed? *(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and the blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. In some places it is customary to burn seven candles on the altar during the entire celebration of Confirmation. Do you understand the meaning? They symbolize the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. The person to be confirmed ought to pray fervently for the gift of Pentecost before the reception of the Sacrament and ought to give heartfelt thanks after he has been confirmed.

2. While the Bishop is confirming, the sponsor places his hand on the shoulder of the one to be confirmed. Do you know why? The sponsor says, as it were: I will interest myself in this child and look upon him as my own; he is to be my ward, and I will be for him a visible Guardian Angel. I will see to it, that he always remains a good Catholic Christian. If he should decline to evil ways, I will lead him back again to the right path. From this we know clearly, who can act as sponsor. Tell me: Who can be a sponsor? The sponsor must be a good Catholic. For a bad Catholic cannot see to it, that the person confirmed remains a good Catholic. The sponsor of Confirmation does not need to be rich; for the present, that he gives on that

occasion, is only a secondary matter. The most beautiful Confirmation present you receive from the Holy Ghost. Only be careful, that the Holy Ghost will be able to give you His gifts most abundantly; prepare well for your Pentecost.

LESSON X.

The Graces of Confirmation.

Catechetical Unit:

1) Which are the effects of Confirmation? L. XVI, Q. 176.
2) What is the character which Confirmation imprints in the soul? L. XIII, Q. 150.
3) Can we receive Confirmation more than once? L. XIII, Q. 149.
4) Why can we not receive Confirmation more than once? L. XIII, Q. 148.
5) Does this character remain in the soul even after death? L. XIII, Q. 151.
6) Is it a sin to neglect Confirmation? L. XV, Q. 175.

Preparation. Dear children, the ceremonies of Confirmation are full of meaning. Let us review them. How does the Bishop confirm? What is the meaning of the imposition of hands? — of the unction? — the blow on the cheek? *(Question the pupils briefly on the preceding lesson.)* The imposing of the hand and the unction tell you what Confirmation effects.

But I must still instruct you better about the graces of Confirmation. But tell me first: Which Sacraments have you already received?—In what does the grace of the Sacrament of Baptism consist?—the graces of Confession?—of Communion?—Which Sacraments can one receive only once?—Whoever in Baptism receives the dignity of a Christian, remains a Christian forever; for the character of Baptism is indelible. Whoever has been ordained a priest, remains a priest

forever; for the character of the priesthood is also indelible. In like manner the character of Confirmation is indelible in the soul.

Aim. Now listen! I will tell you *what graces the Holy Ghost gives you in Confirmation.* First, I am going to tell you about a heroic Christian child.

Presentation. In the early ages of Christianity the Christians were persecuted terribly. Thousands and thousands died for their holy Faith. The last great persecution occurred under the Emperor Diocletian.

At the time there lived in the Holy Land a twelve year old girl, named Aquilina. Immediately after Baptism she received Confirmation. Like a growing flower she bloomed and became strong in the Faith and the love of God. To all she gave the best example by her pious and virtuous life. But it caused her deep sorrow, because so many heathen children knew nothing of God. Therefore she told them gladly about Jesus. Thus she won many for the Christian Faith.

The heathen judge heard about it. At once he had her called before his tribunal and commanded her, saying: "You have persuaded many girls and seduced them, so that they no longer believe in the gods, but rather adore the crucified Christ. Do you not know what the Emperor has forbidden? All are to die, who believe in Christ and honor the cross! Therefore renounce your Faith and adore the gods. If you do not obey, you will feel my anger." Unterrified Aquilina answered: "Mighty judge! you are indeed able to have me tortured. But I do not fear that; I will receive a beautiful heavenly crown for that." A few blows in the face were the answer she received. Firmly and earnestly the little heroine replied: "I am God's image and you strike me? Take care, what will happen to you on the day of judgment!" For that the heroic little girl was scourged twice on her body in a bloody manner. However, her courage was not broken. She said: "The more you strike me, the more does the

Holy Ghost strengthen me." The judge was perplexed and said: "I will give you one more day of grace; you can think it over." Aquilina, however, answered: "I have nothing to think over. I will remain faithful to my Lord and my God; I am ready to die."

Then the judge spoke the death sentence. While dying the young martyr prayed: "My God, I thank Thee, that Thou hast not permitted me to be defeated in the battle." Then she breathed forth her holy soul —on the thirteenth of June, 290.

Explanation. 1. a) Already as a child Aquilina had received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. What occurred then in her soul? The Holy Ghost purified her soul and clothed it with the heavenly garment of sanctifying grace. Thereby her soul became wonderfully beautiful. Just think of Jesus on Mount Thabor. Then suddenly a ray of His Divinity shone through His Sacred Body and Jesus was all transfigured. So Aquilina's soul was as though transfigured after Holy Baptism, surrounded by a heavenly splendor of light. No man saw it. But God saw it and rejoiced, for in her soul there was reflected His image and likeness.

Aquilina received also a second Sacrament immediately after Baptism—Holy Confirmation. Such formerly was the custom. What took place then in her soul?—The Holy Ghost made her soul even more beautiful; grace was increased in her soul; God's image and likeness was reflected in it even more beautifully. That is the first thing, that Confirmation effects in the soul, **it increases sanctifying grace.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

b) Aquilina gradually grew up. The bigger she became, the stronger did she become in the Faith. She loved to tell others about Jesus and did her level best to make them embrace the Faith of Jesus. She did not fear the laws of the Emperor nor the threats of the heathen judge. When she stood before the judge, who commanded her to deny the Faith, what answer did

she give?—"I will remain faithful to my Lord and my God. I am ready to die." Do you see how strong she was in the holy Faith?—Whence did she get that strength?—The Holy Ghost gave it to her, especially in Holy Confirmation. That is the second effect of Confirmation in the soul: **it strengthens the Faith.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

c) But there are many other precious gifts, which the Holy Ghost gave to Aquilina in Holy Confirmation. Let us look at them a little more closely.

The little girl became more and more virtuous from day to day. Her heart was like a growing flower, that breathes forth its sweet perfume more and more. She had a real relish for the things of God; she despised the things of earth and directed her entire life to God and Heaven. She was truly *wise.*

Aquilina was a mere child; and yet, she understood her religion very well. Yes, she was able to explain even the deepest mysteries of her holy Faith to the other children and lead them to embrace the true Faith. The Holy Ghost gave her *understanding.*

When the heathen judge tried to make her renounce the Faith of Christ, by promising her all that her heart might desire, Aquilina saw at once the foolishness of it all. Her conscience warned her of the deceits of the devil and of the dangers to salvation. The Spirit of God had given to her the precious gift of *counsel.*

She remained steadfast in the Faith. All the threats of the judge were in vain. Even under the cruel blows of her persecutors this little Christian heroine did not waver in her Faith. On the contrary, her Faith became all the stronger. She was ready even to lay down her life. So young, and yet to die! Do you see how courageous she was in the Faith? The Holy Ghost gave her the gift of *fortitude.*

When things go wrong with us; when we have to suffer all sorts of trials, how hard it for us to see that it is God's will!—Aquilina was a mere child; she

had to endure frightful sufferings at the hands of the heathen judge. Would you not think, that she would complain and say: "Why does God allow all this to happen to me?" But no, the Holy Ghost had given to her a heavenly gift, the gift of *knowledge,* and so she was able to discover the will of God in all that happened to her.

From the first moment that she came to the use of her reason this little girl loved God as a Father and obeyed Him in all things, because she loved Him with all her heart. The Holy Ghost was in her pure soul leading her to love God and to rejoice in doing the will of God for love of Him. He gave her the gift of *piety.*

Finally, Aquilina feared nothing so much as sin. Therefore when the judge tried to lead her into sin by asking her to deny the Faith, she answered quickly and courageously: "I have nothing to consider; I will remain faithful to my Lord and my God; I am ready to die." Do you see? She was filled with a dread of sin. The Holy Ghost gave her the gift of *fear of the Lord.*

Therefore the third effect of Holy Confirmation are the **gifts of the Holy Ghost** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Now let us repeat together the entire answer of our Catechism. **The effects of Confirmation are an increase of sanctifying grace, the strengthening of our Faith, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost.**

2. A person, who has been confirmed, must fight against all evil and struggle for the good; for he is a soldier of Christ. The cross on his forehead tells him that. But while the Bishop is making the sign of the cross on that person's forehead, the Holy Ghost is impressing the sign of Confirmation on his soul. It is a spiritual mark, and is impressed in such a way, that it can never be effaced; it is indelible. **The character which the Sacrament imprints in the soul is a spiritual**

mark which remains forever. *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. Therefore whoever has been confirmed, remains confirmed forever. That mark, or character, will never be effaced. That is the reason, why we can receive this Holy Sacrament but once in a life-time. **We cannot receive Confirmation more than once, because it imprints a character in the soul.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

4. If the person, who has been confirmed, is a faithful soldier of Christ like our little Aquilina, the character of Confirmation will some day be for him a glorious sign of honor in Heaven. But if that person becomes unfaithful to Christ, the sign of Confirmation will be for him some day an eternal sign of shame and disgrace in Hell. **This character remains in the soul even after death: for the honor and glory of those that are saved; for the shame and disgrace of those who are lost.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

5. In the early Christian days the Christians had to endure many temptations against the Faith; yes, they were even exposed to the danger of losing their life for the sake of the Faith. We see that in the case of little Aquilina. But matters are not much better in our own days. We all are surrounded by many temptations, yes violent temptations against our holy Faith and our virtues. We need special strength, if we are to remain good and holy, practical Catholics. You can easily understand, then, that **it is a sin to neglect Confirmation, especially in these evil days, when Faith and morals are exposed to so many and such violent temptations.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

1. The graces of Confirmation:
   a) increase of sanctifying grace;
   b) strengthening of the Faith;
   c) the gifts of the Holy Ghost;

d) character of Confirmation (2)—a spiritual mark, indelible—hence Confirmation can be received only once (3)—for the glory of the blessed: the shame of the wicked forever (4).

5. Obligation—to be confirmed.

Synthesis. The Holy Ghost effects great things in the soul of the person confirmed. Show me that again in the case of Aquilina.—What are the effects of Confirmation?—Why can Confirmation be received but once in a life-time?—What kind of a mark does it impress on the soul?—Does this mark remain even after death?—Why?—What then is Confirmation?—In short you can remember it in this way: Confirmation is the Sacrament, which makes us strong in the Faith and Christian life. Because the Holy Ghost is especially active in this Sacrament, Confirmation is called "the Sacrament of the Holy Ghost." *(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. In Baptism you were regenerated from water and the Holy Ghost. Very beautifully does St. Paul say: The baptized person becomes "a temple of God, and the Holy Ghost dwells in him" (I Cor. iii, 16). But if the Holy Ghost is already with you since your Holy Baptism, how can He come again in Confirmation?—I might answer: Now the Holy Ghost still slumbers, as it were, within you; but in Confirmation He really becomes active. The person, who is confirmed, is filled with the Holy Ghost. Baptism makes one a Christian, Confirmation perfects the Christian. At Baptism the Holy Ghost places the seed of Faith in the soul, at Confirmation He makes the soul strong in the Faith. The Holy Fathers of the Church say: The person, who is baptized, is like a child in the Faith, but the person, who is confirmed, is like a man.

2. But perhaps one of you might think: "Why after all is Confirmation? I do not have to die for the Faith like Aquilina! Neither will I be scourged." That may be so. But every Christian must fight. You will not be spared that. The wicked children of the world will ridicule you, because of the Faith and your pious life. They will try to seduce you and say: "Surely you will not believe all that the priests say! Oh! this or that is not a sin; others do it too. And then after all you can confess it again." Hence it is a question of remaining steadfast and firm in the Faith and of living a perfect Christian life. Do not allow others to seduce you! Do not fear the ridicule of other people! What of it, if they do laugh at you and make fun of you? St. Augustine once said: "Think and say of me what you will, if only I please God." To fear men is foolish. Why? You are not made any better, if men praise you, neither are you made worse, if they blame you (Imitation of Christ). The soldier of Christ ought to fear *one* thing—sin. The Holy Ghost strengthens you, so that you may be able to do that. Therefore, keep your hearts prepared for Holy Confirmation!

LESSON XI.

The Gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Catechetical Unit:

1) Why do we receive the gift of Wisdom?
L. XVI, Q. 184.
2) Why do we receive the gift of Understanding?
L. XVI, Q. 183.
3) Why do we receive the gift of Counsel?
L. XVI, Q. 182.
4) Why do we receive the gift of Fortitude?
L. XVI, Q. 181.
5) Why do we receive the gift of Knowledge?
L. XVI, Q. 180.

6) Why do we receive the gift of Piety?
L. XVI, Q. 179.

7) Why do we receive the gift of Fear of the Lord?
L. XVI, Q. 178.

8) Which are the gifts of the Holy Ghost?
L. XVI, Q. 177.

Preparation. Dear children, I have already showed you, that the Holy Ghost does not enter into the soul with empty hands. He brings with Him many beautiful things; they are the graces, which shine in the soul like so many precious jewels; the graces of Holy Confirmation. Let us review this teaching. *(Question the pupils briefly on the foregoing lesson.)*—Did you ever observe a rainbow? The rays of the sun are reflected in the rainbow in seven colors. Thus also do the rays of the grace of the Holy Ghost shine forth in the soul in a sevenfold manner. There are seven gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Aim. *These seven gifts of the Holy Ghost I am going to explain to you briefly today.*

Now it is necessary for you to think a little, so that you may understand all correctly. Therefore, attention!

Presentation, Explanation, Application.

I. The Gift of Wisdom.

1. You know the story of the rich man. He clothed himself in purple and fine linen; he also feasted daily in a sumptuous manner. Outside before the door of his house lay the poor man, Lazarus, miserable and abandoned and all covered with sores. No one gave him even a little piece of bread. But what happened? —The rich man had to die and—was buried in Hell. The poor man also died and the angels carried him up into Heaven.

2. Now tell me: Which of these two was prudent? Who was wise?—The rich man led an easy-going life

upon this earth. To eat and to drink and to enjoy himself, as though every day were a wedding-day, that was his life's work. He thought only of the earthly and did not trouble himself about the heavenly things. He had no taste, no relish for the things of God; he directed his whole life to his own honor and glory. And the reward for his life of sin?—To seek only sinful earthly pleasures and thereby lose Heaven, what foolishness!

But Lazarus was entirely different. He was poor, but pious. He bore his hard life patiently. He thought to himself: God knows all and God wills all. God will reward me for this! He despised the foolish pleasures of earth; he has no taste for theim; all his thoughts and desires were directed to God and Heaven. He had the gift of Wisdom; that is true Wisdom. **We receive the gift of Wisdom to give us a relish for the things of God, and to direct our whole life and all our actions to His honor and glory.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)* This Wisdom is a gift of the Holy Ghost.—You know, that the eagle builds his nest on the dizzy mountain heights; there he likes to be. The sparrow on the contrary prefers to sport on the ground; to wallow in the filth, that is pleasure for him. The wise man is like the eagle: he direct his eyes and heart heavenwards. Foolish worldlings feel content in the filth of the earth.

3. How do matters stand with you? Are you truly wise? Which do you prefer: the joys of earth or the joys of Heaven? Many children are like the butterflies, that sip and pilfer in all flowers. They want to have a share in everything and be everywhere, to see everything, and hear everything, and enjoy everything. That is not a good beginning and will not have a good ending. Do you also want to act like that? No; live for God and strive for Heaven! Holy Ghost, give me Wisdom, that I may despise the things of earth and strive for the things of God and Heaven!

II. The Gift of Understanding.

1. This gift you already know from the Apostles. They were ignorant and uncultured men. Then the Holy Ghost came upon them. Suddenly a heavenly light entered into their souls. Now they understood all that Jesus had taught, and they recalled everything, as Jesus had foretold they would: "The Holy Ghost will teach you all things, and will bring all things to your minds, whatsoever I shall have said to you" (John xiv, 26). Now it was an easy matter for them to teach the nations; for they knew more clearly the mysteries of Faith. That is the gift of Understanding. **—We receive the gift of Understanding to enable us to know more clearly the mysteries of Faith.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

2. Many a simple man among the ordinary people can speak about the mysteries of religion like a book. Oftentimes a child is wiser in religion than a learned, educated person. Such persons have the gift of Understanding from the Holy Ghost. St. Catherine was only eighteen years of age. She was accused of being a Christian and brought before the court. Fifty learned heathens wanted to dispute with her about religion. However, the virgin spoke so beautifully about the mysteries of the Christian Faith, that all declared: "Catherine is wiser than all of us together; she has the truth. We too are Christians." And all died for the Christian Faith.

3. With many children it is a difficult matter to learn; nothing wants to enter into their head. What ought such a child to do?—Each time before studying pray briefly to the Holy Ghost: Come, Holy Ghost, help me to understand! You will see, that soon things will go much more easily.

III. The Gift of Counsel.

1. A little girl, whose name was Agnes, had just reached her fifth birthday, and her mother invited some friends to come and dine with them in honor of

the happy occasion. Agnes' grandfather was present also; and when the little child ran forward to meet him, he put a gold coin into her hand as his gift. As may well be imagined Agnes was filled with joy, when she saw the shining gold and knew it was all her own. She showed it to everyone that came to the house. While her parents were at dinner, Agnes left the house to amuse herself at the door of the house. Just then a country woman happened along carrying a basketful of fruit. Agnes ran toward her and cried out: "Look here! look at this beautiful piece of money." The woman took the coin into her hand, and seeing that it was gold, said to the child: "Yes, it is indeed beautiful. I will give you this large red-cheeked apple, if you will give me your little piece of money." The child took the apple; it was very pretty. "Yes," she answered, "I will give you the money in exchange for the apple." When the woman had received the money, she went away at once, and was seen no more. Agnes after admiring the fruit for a few moments, thought that she would run and show it to her mother. "Look, mother!" she said, "look at this beautiful apple." "Where did you get that apple, my child?" "Oh, a good woman was passing and gave it to me for the gold coin. Is it not lovely?" When her mother had heard that, she became very angry and her father gave her a severe scolding. But the grandfather said: "Do not find fault with the child, for she did not know what she was doing. She did not understand the value of the piece of money, and it was quite natural for her to give it away for that beautiful apple, which she considered to be more valuable."

2. Do you understand the meaning of this story?—That gold coin is a picture of the precious treasure of Heaven. The old woman, that deceived the little child, is a picture of the devil, who holds out to us the pleasures and riches of the world. He asks us to give up the thought of Heaven and the other life and to enjoy the miserable things of this life—to sell the joys of

Heaven for the miserable things of earth. Yes, we need some one to warn us of the deceits of the devil, and of the dangers to salvation. We need good advice, good counsel. The Holy Ghost is our Counsellor through His gift of Counsel.—**We receive the gift of Counsel to warn us of the deceits of the devil, and of the dangers to salvation.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. Dear children, people often say: "Now good advice, or counsel, is expensive; what shall I do?" Yes, with men it is indeed expensive; but with God—no! The Holy Ghost can give it to us very cheaply. Only pray with all your heart and He will surely give you the proper advice or counsel. The devil often changes himself into an angel of light, as the Apostle tells us, in order to deceive us. We need the gift of Counsel, in order that we may not be led astray. But the people of the world ask many questions and complain much; but they never think of the Holy Ghost. Do you also want to be so foolish? If you ever need good advice, first go to the Holy Ghost; for He is the very best Counsellor. "Who shall know Thy thought (O God), except Thou give wisdom, and send Thy Holy Spirit from above,—and so men may learn the things that please Thee?" (Wisdom ix, 17s).

IV. The Gift of Fortitude.

1. 2. Scarcely had the Apostles received the gift of Pentecost, when they were like changed men. Before that they were so weak, now they were strong, prepared even to die. The High Council forbade them to preach. Earnestly and firmly Peter answered: "We must obey God more than men!" The Apostles were despised, ridiculed, persecuted, cast into prison; but nothing was able to frighten or deter them. So strong were they by the Holy Ghost. He gave them the gift of Fortitude. — **We receive the gift of Fortitude to strengthen us to do the will of God in all things.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. Do you know another example?—The Machabean brothers and their mother, St. John Nepomucene, St. Lawrence.—When St. Augustine wanted to be converted, he always doubted as to whether he would really be able to become a good Christian. Then he heard an interior voice: "What! others have been able to do it, and became holy; why should you not be able to do it?" And he did become holy through the Holy Ghost.—The gift of Fortitude every Christian needs; for the life of a Christian is a life of sacrifice. The true Christian must bear and suffer many a thing. To do that he needs power and fortitude from above; then everything goes well. With St. Paul we can say: "I can do all things in Him, that strengtheneth me." (Phil. iv, 13).

V. The Gift of Knowledge.

1. 2. Recall the story of the pious and patient Job. He was wealthy and happy and esteemed by all that knew him. The Lord permitted Satan to tempt this virtuous man. Suddenly and without warning messengers came to announce, that all his possessions had been destroyed, that his sons and daughters had been killed. Did Job perhaps complain: "Why must all this misfortune come upon me?" No, falling down upon his knees he worshipped God, saying: "The Lord hath given and the Lord hath taken away. As it hath pleased the Lord, so be it done. Blessed be the name of the Lord!" Do you see? Job did not, of course, understand why all this misfortune befell him; nevertheless, he believed that it happened according to the will of God. Thereupon Satan struck Job with a most grievous ulcer from the sole of his foot even to the top of his head. As he sat upon a dung-hill bemoaning his misery, his wife came to mock him, saying: "Bless God and die!" Did Job perhaps turn his gaze away from the Lord and say: "Why must all this happen to me?" No, instead of complaining foolishly against the Lord, Job said: "If we have received good things

at the hand of God, why should we not receive evil?"—He meant to say: God permits all this. It happens by His will. Blessed be the will of God!—When his three friends came to visit him, instead of comforting him, they reproached him saying that secretly he must have been a great sinner, or the just God would not have afflicted him in so grievous a manner. How that must have hurt the feelings of Job! But loudly and firmly asserting his innocence, Job said: "I know that my Redeemer liveth; and in the last day I shall rise out of the earth; and I shall be clothed again in my skin, and in my flesh I shall see my God." That is to say: Even though I have to die now in misery and misunderstood by others, still I will not lose my trust in God. All things happen according to His holy will.—Dear children, Job must have had a special teacher to enlighten his mind, so that in sickness and in misery and in false accusation he might be able to see that whatever happened to him took place according to the will of the Lord. Yes, the Holy Ghost was his Teacher. He gave to Job the gift of Knowledge.—**We receive the gift of Knowledge to enable us to discover the will of God in all things.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. There are people, that look upon everything, war, misfortune, etc., as chance. But the soul, that is taught by the Holy Spirit, sees at once: This is not chance. No, everything that happens in the world is directed by a wise God and leads us to God. Such a soul sees why and wherefore this was done by God, namely, as a punishment for sin—as a test, or as a reward for patience—as an answer to prayer, etc. St. Gertrude was accustomed to repeat 363 times each day: "O my loving Jesus, Thy will be done!" Let us resolve to say frequently each day: "Not my will, but Thine be done, O Lord!" If you ask the Holy Ghost for this gift He will give it to you without fail.

VI. The Gift of Piety.

1. 2. Do you remember what you learned about St. Aloysius in your Communion instructions? How zealous he was at prayer! How he liked to hear about Divine things! How he delighted to be with Jesus! For hours he knelt before the tabernacle and did not want to go away at all; his confessor had to command him strictly to shorten his acts of penance. Yes, Aloysius did love God as a Father and he proved this by obeying Him in all things most conscientiously. God was everything to him; therefore his thoughts were always with God. He had the gift of Piety.—**We receive the gift of Piety to make us love God as a Father and obey Him because we love Him.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. But there are many Christians, who have very little love for God. They show it too by their conduct. They pray little, and the little they do pray, they perform as badly as possible. They do not want to hear about going to the Lord's House, the Church. Divine service always lasts too long for them. They do not like to listen to a sermon—that is too monotonous for them. Do they love God?—No, they lack the gift of Piety. Are you perhaps like them? Do you never say: "What! pray again? Go to church again? Go to Confession again?" Do you like to attend the Christian Doctrine instructions? Do you faithfully keep God's Commandments, because you love Him as your Father?—Believe me: If you do not like to do these things now, later on you will not want to do them either.—A pious Christian must of course suffer much, for to obey God means to suffer. The careless worldlings laugh at the pious Christian and call him sarcastically a St. Aloysius. But what of it? Let the foolish worldlings wag their tongues in their empty heads. Some day they will lose all desire of laughing —at death. "He that laughs last, laughs best!"

VII. The Gift of Fear of the Lord.

1. Just think again of Aloysius! As a child he often repeated bad words; but he did not understand at all what he was saying. His guardian heard it and scolded him saying: "Aloysius! that is a sin, you may not do that again!" Then the little fellow began to cry bitterly and never again spoke such words. So great was his fear of sin, so great his love for God! That is the gift of Fear of the Lord: **We receive the gift of Fear of the Lord to fill us with a dread of sin.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

2. The person that fears God, thinks to himself: I would rather lose everything than lose God! Rather die than commit a mortal sin! What did Joseph of Egypt say when in danger of sin?—"How can I do this wicked thing, and sin against my God?" (Gen. xxxix, 9). And Susanna said: "It is better for me to fall into your hands without doing it, than to sin in the sight of the Lord" (Dan. xiii, 23).

3. Have you also such a Fear of the Lord in your hearts? Is God dearer to you than everything upon earth? You know the beautiful words of old father Tobias: "My son, have God in thy heart all the days of thy life and beware, lest thou ever consent to sin!" Neither forget the old proverb: "Only one thing is necessary: Child, fear God!"

Write on the blackboard:

The Gifts of the Holy Ghost:

1. Wisdom—to relish the things of God and to direct our whole life and all our actions to God.
2. Understanding—to know more clearly the mysteries of Faith.
3. Counsel—to warn us of the deceits of the devil and the dangers to salvation.
4. Fortitude—to strengthen us to do the will of God always.

5. Knowledge—to enable us to discover God's will in all things.

6. Piety—to make us love God as a Father and obey Him out of love.

7. Fear of the Lord—to fill us with a dread of sin.

Synthesis. In a wonderfully beautiful manner are the rays of the sun reflected in the rainbow; gloriously do the gifts of the Holy Ghost shine forth in the soul. Which are the gifts of the Holy Ghost?—Why do we receive the gift of Wisdom?—of Understanding? etc. —Now let us humbly ask for the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. "Come, Holy Ghost, Creator blest," etc. *(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

LESSON XII.

Reception of Holy Confirmation.

Catechetical Unit:

1) To receive Confirmation worthily is it necessary to be in the state of grace? L. XV, Q. 173.

2) What special preparation should be made to receive Confirmation? L. XV, Q. 174.

Preparation. Dear children, the soul in which the Holy Ghost is, shines and sparkles with a sevenfold heavenly light. The Spirit of God rests in such a soul: "The Spirit of Wisdom and of Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and of Fortitude, the Spirit of Knowledge and of Piety, and it is filled with the Spirit of the Fear of God." (Isaias xi, 1s). Let us review this teaching. *(Question the pupils briefly on the preceding lesson.)*—What did I say to you about the preparation for Holy Confirmation?—What ought you to do each day?—Did you obey my words of counsel?—Consider well, that I must testify before the Bishop, that all the children are well prepared for Confirma-

tion. The Bishop is very exacting about this matter. If you have hitherto neglected the preparation it is now high time to begin. That great day of grace is already at hand. Now it is a question of making the final preparation! But how?

Aim. That is what I shall show you today: *What is necessary to make a good preparation for Holy Confirmation?* But first I am going to relate to you about a pious child that was confirmed.

Presentation. Francis was a good child of God. On the Sunday after Easter he was allowed to make his First Holy Communion. Then he was perfectly happy. When he had Jesus in his heart, he prayed so beautifully: "O Jesus! Thou art mine, and I am Thine. I would rather die than lose Thee again!" He kept his promise faithfully. After Communion he was full of zeal and a model for all the children. But another great grace was in store for him: the grace of Holy Confirmation.

About three years later he was to receive the Holy Ghost in Confirmation — on the feast of Pentecost. Soon the great day was near. He began to prepare himself. The last nine days before Confirmation he made a special devotion in honor of the Holy Spirit. Each morning he went to Holy Mass and made an offering of himself for the grace of a good Confirmation. Each afternoon he visited Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and prayed fervently for the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. Now his Pentecost was already close at hand. The day before Pentecost the boy again confessed his sins contritely and humbly; the next morning he received Jesus again in Holy Communion. Now his heart was prepared to receive the exalted and heavenly Guest, the Holy Ghost.

Solemnly the Bishop entered into the church. During Holy Mass the child prayed fervently again and again: "Come, Holy Ghost, Creator blest, and in my

heart take up Thy rest!" Attentively he listened to the instructions on Confirmation given by the Bishop.

The great moment was come. The Bishop laid his hand on the boy, anointed him with the holy chrism and prayed: "Francis, I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." Meanwhile quietly and fervently the pious child prayed: "Come, O come, Holy Ghost! with Thy grace and heavenly aid, to fill the heart which Thou hast made." Then he thanked God heartily for the gift of Pentecost: "Thanks be to Thee, O good Holy Ghost, a thousand thanks! I will believe, live and die as a Christian." Still praying he waited until the end of the celebration and received the Bishop's blessing while kneeling. Only then did he leave the house of God.

Explanation. 1. After Jesus had ascended into Heaven, the Apostles filled with joy returned into the city. There they waited for nine days for the promised Holy Ghost and persevered together in prayer with Mary, the Mother of Jesus. Behold a model for all who are preparing for Confirmation! How did Francis act?—That is what I would like to impress upon your mind. Make a nine day's devotion—**a Novena**—to the Holy Ghost. Attend Holy Mass every day; visit the Blessed Sacrament every afternoon and pray for the gifts of the Holy Ghost by reciting seven Our Fathers with the petition: "Come, O come, Holy Ghost, Creator blest!" That is a good preparation for your Pentecost. The better the preparation, the greater the graces of Confirmation. If you please the Holy Ghost, He will please you even more.

2. But it is not enough to pray; more than that is required for a good preparation. What did little Francis do?—To purify the heart and to sanctify it by a good Confession—that is necessary. **To receive Confirmation worthily it is necessary to be in that state of grace.**

(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.) Why? That is evident. For a heavenly Guest comes into the soul, the Holy Ghost. He is just as holy as Jesus Christ. But you all know, that whoever receives Jesus unworthily in Holy Communion commits a sacrilege. He that receives the Holy Ghost unworthily in Confirmation, also commits a sacrilege. Surely such a grievous sin none of you desire to commit! That would be a great misfortune. For you can receive Holy Confirmation but once. If the grace of Confirmation is once lost, it is lost and gone for your whole life.

3. The state of grace is necessary. But that too is not yet enough. It is your duty to do as little Francis did. He was regular in attending the Christian Doctrine class. There he heard the chief mysteries of our holy Faith and the duties of a Christian life explained. The catechist taught him about the Sacrament of Confirmation—what it is and what effects it produces in the soul. That is another duty for every one, who wishes to prepare himself for this holy Sacrament. Our Catechism says: **Persons of an age to learn should know the chief mysteries of Faith and the duties of a Christian, and be instructed in the nature and effects of this Sacrament.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

4. Finally a great deal depends upon how one uses the final hours of grace before Holy Confirmation. How did the boy of our story conduct himself during the services of Confirmation?—He prayed heartily and fervently; again and again he invoked the Holy Ghost, especially during the moment of Confirmation: "Come, O come, Holy Ghost!" That is the proper thing to do: *A person to prepare himself for receiving Confirmation must heartily desire the grace of the Holy Ghost, and for that reason, he must fervently pray, and perform good works. (Repeat together.)* Yes, he ought to have an ardent longing for the Holy Ghost just as

the Apostles once did. The person to be confirmed ought, as it were, to hunger and thirst for the heavenly gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Apostles prayed with Mary, the Mother of Jesus. Likewise the person, who is to be confirmed, ought not to forget to beg Mary, to lead him with her motherly hand to the Holy Ghost.

5. The person confirmed receives the gifts of the Holy Ghost. But he must therefore also promise something.—The person confirmed promises two things: 1) I will believe as a Catholic; 2) I will live and die as a Christian. That is your baptismal vow. At your First Holy Communion you renewed your baptismal vow. Now at Holy Confirmation you are to renew once more that same promise. But who is a good Christian?—To like to pray, to go to church, to receive the holy Sacraments diligently, in brief, to conscientiously keep the Commandments of God and of the Church: that is the duty of a good Christian. For this purpose you receive the power of the Holy Ghost.—Remember then: *The person confirmed ought to promise God, to live and die as a good Christian. (Repeat together.)*

6. Holy Confirmation ends with the blessing of the Bishop. The concluding blessing also belongs to Confirmation and no person, who has received Confirmation, may miss it. *The person confirmed ought not to leave the church before the Bishop has given his benediction. (Repeat together.)* If after Confirmation you have to wait a little, imitate the little boy of our story: Thank God for the Holy Ghost's gifts of grace and pray devoutly from your prayer-book.

Write on the blackboard:

The person to be confirmed ought

1) to be in the state of grace;
2) to know the chief mysteries of our Faith and the duties of a Christian.

Synthesis. Now you know how you ought to conduct yourselves *before* Confirmation, *during* Confirmation and *after* Confirmation. How ought you to prepare yourselves during the last nine days? — How ought you to receive Holy Confirmation?—Why is the state of grace necessary?—What prayer might you say at the moment of Confirmation?—What truths must he know, who is to be confirmed?—What promises should the person make to God, who is going to be confirmed?—Why must those that have been confirmed remain for the final blessing? *(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. *The person to be confirmed must be in the state of grace.* To receive Holy Confirmation unworthily would be a very shameful act of ingratitude towards the Holy Ghost—(More than a hundred years ago there was a revolution in France, that is, civil war. Incredible crimes were committed. One day a noble, venerable priest with silver hair was led out to death. He had done evil to no one, but good to all. Suddenly a young man pushes his way through the crowd and pierces the heart of the priest with a naked dagger and cries out: "Die, old man! Now it is your turn to die." Everybody was filled with astonishment; for all knew that the priest had heaped favors upon that inhuman creature. How heartless and ungrateful! In a very similar manner does he act, who wishes to receive Holy Confirmation unworthily, in mortal sin.)—The Holy Ghost is our greatest Benefactor. Just think of what good He has already done for you.—In Baptism He made you to be children of God; in Penance He forgave your sins; in Communion He gave you Jesus. Yes, every good thought, every pious prayer of your heart is a grace of the Holy Ghost. What a shameful ingratitude would it not be, to receive the Sacrament of Holy Confirmation unworthily! May God preserve you from such a misfortune!

2. The person to be confirmed promises: *I will live and die as a good Christian.* A brave soldier goes to battle with the cry: For the President and the country —faithful unto death! He that receives Confirmation becomes a soldier of Christ; he must fight for his Ruler Christ; he must fight for his earthly country, the Church, and for his heavenly country. Your battle cry too ought to be: Faithful unto death! Then some day on your death-bed you can say as did St. Paul: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the Faith. Christ, my Judge, will give me the reward of eternal life' (II Tim. vi, 7).—"Catholic I am and Catholic is my name; as a Catholic will I live and die; thus I will not perish; it is good to die as a Catholic!"

LESSON XIII.

The Fruits of the Holy Ghost.

Catechetical Unit:

Which are the twelve fruits of the Holy Ghost? L. XVI, Q. 186.

Preparation. Dear children, let us first review what we have learned in the last class. *(Question the pupils briefly on the foregoing lesson.)* — When the Holy Ghost dwells in the heart, man is like a tree full of life, that produces the best and the sweetest fruits, that is, works of virtue and holiness. If, on the other hand, the spirit of the world and the flesh takes possession of man's heart, it becomes like a tree, which produces bad and bitter fruits. These evil fruits St. Paul calls "the works of the flesh, which are uncleanness, enmities, quarrels, murders, drunkenness, and such like" (Gal. v, 19s). By the fruits, therefore, we can tell what sort of spirit animates a man. The Saviour Himself says: "By their fruits you shall know them;" and again: "Every good tree bringeth forth

good fruit, and the evil tree bringeth forth evil fruit" (Matt. vii, 16s). St. Paul gives us the names of some of the most excellent of these good fruits, which the Holy Ghost produces in the heart of a holy man. They are charming and pleasing to God and man; they make life here on earth happy and sweet, and at the same time they are the pledge and foretaste of a still greater happiness and sweetness, which will be the reward in the life to come.

Aim. Today I intend to explain for you: *Which are the fruits of the Holy Ghost?* We can best understand these fruits, if we look at the beautiful life of one of God's greatest Saints, in whom these fruits appeared so clearly.

Presentation. St. Francis of Assisi, the founder of the great Franciscan order of religious, led a life of such lovely and heroic sanctity, that even non-Catholics delight to speak of him as "God's Poor Little Man of Assisi." While still living in the world, Francis was meek and pious, and especially generous to the poor. At the age of twenty-five he left his home and all his earthly possessions, in order to give himself entirely to the service of God and to corporal and spiritual works of mercy towards his neighbor.

He showed his charity for God particularly by his devotion to Christ's Passion. The crucifix was his only book, and in it he read the story of true wisdom, the lesson of Jesus' poverty, humility, patience, goodness, meekness, suffering, and every other virtue. Then he set himself courageously to imitate in his own life these shining virtues of the Saviour. Two years before his death Francis saw in vision the Crucified Christ. While meditating on Jesus' bitter Passion, Francis received in a miraculous manner the five Sacred Wounds of Jesus impressed on his own hands and feet and side. Blood issued from these wounds and caused him intense pain, but he rejoiced in spirit, because he had received this great sign of Jesus' love

for him. He carried these wounds (stigmata, as they are called) with him to the grave. *(Show the pupils a large picture of this event.)*

Francis also proved his love for his neighbor by visiting the sick in the hospitals, serving them, washing their wounds and even kissing their ulcers. In his heart the whole world found refuge. Yes, the very animals found in Francis a tender friend and protector. He journeyed as a missionary throughout his native land, Italy, into Spain, Palestine, and even visited Morocco in Africa, where he preached before the famous Mohametan King Miromolin. He exhorted the people to penance with such energy and zeal, that his words pierced their heart like fiery arrows.

When his father, his brother, and his acquaintances, ridiculed him for appearing as a beggar in the streets, he bore all their insults patiently and meekly, never getting angry even for a moment. Yes, when the people pelted him with mud and stones, and called him a madman and a fool, Francis endured it all, feeling joy and gladness in his heart. On a certain occasion while visiting Rome, he saw a multitude of beggars before the church of St. Peter. He took off his own clothing and gave it to one, whom he thought to be the poorest among them. He clothed himself with the rags of this beggar and remained in the company of these poor people all day, his heart overflowing with an extraordinary comfort and joy. Indeed, so great was his happiness in the midst of suffering and trial, that he begged God to lessen this joy, lest he die.

He was as simple and sincere as a little child. He used to say frequently: "What a man is in the sight of God, so much he is and no more!" To give you but one instance of his sincerity. When one of his brothers in religion insisted upon sewing a piece of fox skin under his clothing to keep away the cold, Francis, consented only upon the condition, that another piece of the same size be sewed on the outside. So great was

his hatred for all hypocrisy and deceit. His modesty appeared in all that he did and said. One day he said to one of his brothers in religion: "Come, let us go out to preach!" They walked through the streets of the city without saying a word; then they returned to the convent. Francis' companion asked: "I thought you said we were to preach?" The Saint replied: "We did preach. Our whole conduct is a sermon." He guarded with special care the angelic virtue of purity. On a certain occasion while tempted violently against holy purity, Francis threw himself into a ditch of snow, so that he might overcome the temptations of the devil. In treating with women he kept such a strict watch over his eyes, that he scarcely knew any woman even by sight.

Finally the hour of his death was at hand. He ordered his brothers in religion to lay him upon the bare ground. They did so, covering his body with an old garment. Then he said to them: "Farewell, my children! Always remain in the fear of the Lord. I hasten to go to our Lord, to Whose grace I recommend you." Then he gave up his heroic soul to God on the fourth of October, 1226, at the age of forty-five. Jesus plucked the ripe fruits of the Holy Ghost from Francis' soul and placed them in the rich store-house of Heaven.

Explanation. Who is there, that does not admire the glorious fruits, that adorned the heart of this hero of Christ? Yes, the heart of Francis was like a beautiful garden, which the hand of God himself planted. Let us now look at these bright flowers, these luscious heavenly fruits of the Holy Ghost.

1. The perfect love of God dwelt in the soul of this Saint. No wonder, then, that Francis produced such deeds of charity for God and man! Just think how his heart burned with love for Jesus, particularly when meditating on the Passion of the Saviour. Who can count the labors, the trials, he willingly underwent in

serving his neighbor for the love of God? No work was too great, no task too hard, if only he could make men love God more and more. There you see the first glorious fruit of the Holy Ghost—**Charity.** *(Use the blackboard. See the diagram below just above the synthesis).*

2. But you must not imagine, that Francis did not find it hard to perform these deeds of charity. He did find it hard. For he had to endure many a bitter struggle against his own natural inclinations. The devil, too, tempted him to forget God. The world called out loudly to him to leave the straight and narrow path, and to walk like other men upon the broad and crooked path of sin. Men did not always repay his goodness to them with kindness and gratitude. On the contrary, frequently they heaped abuse upon him. And yet, Francis never grew sad; he never lost the joy of his soul. His own conscience told him, that he was closely united with Jesus, his dearest Friend. Why, then, should he not rejoice and be glad? Indeed, so great was this interior happiness, that he begged God to lessen that joy, lest he die. That is a second fruit of the Holy Ghost—**Joy.** *(Use the blackboard.)*

3. No matter what trials came upon him; no matter how bitter the cares, that pressed upon him; Francis always remained undisturbed. He felt a wonderful peace and quiet in his heart. His soul was at rest with God and man. Therefore, he always felt "the peace which surpasseth all understanding" (Phil. iv, 7), a special fruit of the Holy Ghost. The third fruit, therefore, is **Peace.** *(Use the blackboard.)*

4. From the first hour of his conversion this great Saint had to endure all sorts of *evils.* His father, his brother, the people generally, ridiculed him and treated him as a fool and a madman. How do you know that? — Did Francis, perhaps, become excited and angry over this treatment? No, he remained calm; he drove away immediately every feeling of revenge

and annoyance. He was always resigned amid the trials of life. Yes, he even rejoiced in them. That is a fourth fruit of the Holy Ghost—**Patience.** *(Use the blackboard.)*

5. Surely many a time Francis must have been tempted to murmur and complain, when he saw how often men were enjoying the *good things* of life, while he was without these blessings. But no; our hero knew that those good things, which were now delayed, would some day be given to him in abundance in Heaven. Therefore, he continued to serve God in spite of all, trusting in God's promises. That is the fifth fruit of the Holy Ghost—**Longanimity.** *(Use the blackboard.)*

6. Francis really meant well with all men. He had the firm *will to do good* to all. He really wanted to serve God and men. He wished to avoid everything, that might cause his neighbor even the least pain and annoyance, the slightest injury. He was ever ready to comfort those in need or in sin. Can anyone deny that Francis was good? Yes, that is the sixth fruit of the Holy Ghost—**Goodness.** *(Use the blackboard.)*

7. But Francis was not only willing to serve and to oblige; he also *did good* to all. We see that from his works of mrcy. Tell me a few instances. He felt real sympathy for everyone, that was in need or in sin. How gentle and kind was he not, even to the animals! His heart was like the heart of a loving mother for her dear children. That is the seventh fruit of the Holy Ghost—**Benignity.** *(Use the blackboard.)*

8. Francis hated all double-dealing towards others. He was always open and sincere in all his thoughts, words and deeds. He loved the truth. Tell me an example of this. Yes, he would not allow his brother in religion to hide his warm clothing from the eyes of men, lest they might think him better than he really was. He abhorred all deceit. He was open and simple and truthful. That is the eighth fruit of the Holy Ghost—**Faith.** *(Use the blackboard.)*

9. It is scarcely credible what evils came upon this Saint. But Francis always kept his temper; he never got angry; he put down every feeling of resentment and ill-will. He always remained kind and gentle and forebearing towards all men. For he kept in mind the words of Jesus: "Learn of Me, for I am meek and humble of heart." There you see the ninth fruit of the Holy Ghost—**Meekness.** *(Use the blackboard.)*

10. There is one special fruit of the Holy Ghost, that shines with great splendor in the life of St. Francis, and makes him appear so attractive and lovable even to non-Catholics. Francis never tried to make an *external* show of himself before others. He was unassuming, reserved and retiring in speech, in dress, and in manners. He had a delicate regard for the feelings of others. How do you know that? All that he had to do was to walk in the streets, without even saying a single word, and all that saw him were edified. The words of the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures were true in his regard: "The attire of the body, and the laughter of the teeth, and the gait of the man show what he is" (Ecclesiasticus xix, 27). That is the tenth fruit of the Holy Ghost—**Modesty.** *(Use the blackboard.)*

11. 12. Finally, like all of God's Saints, Francis practised the virtue, that makes a man like the Holy Angels—purity. Recall how carefully he guarded his eyes and tongue, so that no impure sin might soil his soul. Think of his conduct towards women; he scarcely knew a single woman even by sight. You remember, that he even threw himself into a snowdrift in order to extinguish the fires of impurity within his heart. "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God."—these words of Jesus might be said in all truth of St. Francis of Assisi. The eleventh and twelfth fruits of the Holy Ghost are **Continency** and **Chastity.** *(Use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:
Fruits of the Holy Ghost:

1. Charity—love of God and man—deeds of love;
2. Joy—interior happiness; cheerfulness in doing good, even in the midst of trials;
3. Peace—absence of care and worry; at rest with God and man;
4. Patience—bearing with others, their ways and failings; absence of resentment;
5. Longanimity—undisturbed over the lack of good things;
6. Goodness—well-disposed to all; avoiding pain to others;
7. Benignity—doing good to all; gentle, sympathetic to all;
8. Faith—truthfulness; hating deceit, hypocrisy;
9. Meekness—suffering evils with even mind, neither giving nor taking offence;
10. Modesty—moderation in speech, dress, manner; unassuming disposition;
11.-12. Continency-Chastity—practice of holy purity.

Synthesis. What beautiful fruits did not the grace of the Holy Ghost produce in the life of St. Francis! Let us review these effects of the grace of God. What fruits does the Holy Ghost produce in the soul of the person, in whom He dwells? Which are the twelve fruits of the Holy Ghost? What do you mean by the fruit of Charity?—of Joy, etc? *(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. Every one loves to look upon the bright flowers and ripe fruits, that flourish on the earth. So, too, the flowers and fruits that grow in the heart of a true child of God are pleasing and delightful to God and to men. But just as there are blind men in the world, who cannot see the bright colors of the flowers and fruits, so, too, there are many blind worldlings, who cannot see the beauty of the fruits

and flowers of the Holy Ghost. For instance, the worldly-minded man cannot understand how a person can be truly happy, who leads a mortified and penitential life. Such a person imagines that a pious Christian cannot be truly happy and content. And yet, joy is the second of the twelve fruits of the Holy Ghost. Such a worldly-minded person is blind. Why? Because he does not understand the fruits of the Holy Ghost. He sees only the thorns of self-denial, but not the roses that grow from works of self-denial. He sees only the bitterness of sufferings, but he does not taste the sweetness, that goes with a patient bearing of all the trials of life. He sees the cross, but not the joy and the peace, which the Holy Ghost pours out over the cross. Dear children, do not be blind like so many of the children of the world. Ask the Holy Spirit, each time that you go to Holy Communion, to enlighten your eyes, so that they may see the beauty and loveliness of the fruits of the Holy Ghost. Then you will feel like imitating the lives of the Saints, in whom these bright flowers and beautiful fruits shine forth.

2. In Holy Confirmation especially will you receive the Holy Ghost and His graces. And by faithfully using those graces you, too, will be able to produce the fruits of the Holy Ghost in your life. Remember: "Every tree that doth not yield good fruit, shall be cut down" (Matt. iii, 10). You recall the parable of the barren fig tree. Our Divine Lord had been teaching almost three years and admonishing the Jews, laboring unceasingly for their salvation. Yet, His labors and preaching had produced little fruit. Therefore, He compared them to a fig tree, which a certain man planted in his vineyard and which, after all his care and trouble, bore no fruit. Then the master of the vineyard said to his vine-dresser: "Behold, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this tree, and I find none. Cut it down, therefore! Why doth it take up the ground?" But the vine-dresser answered, saying: "Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig about it, if

so haply it bear fruit; but if not, then, after all thou shalt cut it down." Surely, this parable ought to terrify all, but particularly those sinners, who say: "I will be converted on my death-bed," because they may be struck down by sudden death and the end—.

3. What fruits of the Holy Ghost are you bringing forth? How about charity? Are you kind, good, meek to all? How about patience and longanimity in trials? Are you chaste in all your thoughts, words and deeds? Make an act of perfect contrition for your carelessness. Now, let us beg the Holy Ghost to help us to show forth in our life these glorious fruits:

"Come, Holy Ghost, Creator blest,
And in our hearts take up Thy rest;
Come with Thy grace and heavenly aid,
To fill the hearts which Thou hast made."

LESSON XIV.

Forget-me-nots for Confirmation.

1. Days of grace have come for you. You may receive three holy Sacraments in succession: Penance, Communion and Confirmation.

2. It is for you to prepare your hearts for the gifts of the Holy Ghost. Therefore, purify and sanctify your souls by a good Confession and a worthy Communion.

3. Prepare yourselves with all zeal for Holy Confirmation, so that your heart may be a worthy dwelling for the Holy Spirit. A bad Confession and Communion can, indeed, be made good again. But whoever receives Holy Confirmation unworthily cannot receive it again in a worthy manner.

4. You should long for the gift of Pentecost with the same holy desire, with which the Apostles once longed for it. Therefore, on the eve of Confirmation

think very often of the Holy Ghost and pray again and again: "Come, O come, Thou Comforter of my soul."

5. The evening before Confirmation recite, kneeling if possible, a good hearty evening prayer; then go to sleep with the thought of the joy of tomorrow.

6. The first thought and salutation in the morning of the Confirmation day ought to belong to the Holy Ghost; then say a good morning prayer.

7. Be modest while dressing, so that nothing may happen, that would grieve the Holy Ghost.

8. Be on your guard against all vanity in dress. The Holy Ghost resists the proud, but He gives His grace to the humble. He does not regard a beautiful dress, but looks rather upon a pure heart.

9. The hair ought not to hang down over the forehead; for that is not proper and interferes with the unction.

10. It is not commanded to receive Holy Confirmation fasting, but it is the wish of the Church. But generally, children are too weak to fast before Confirmation, especially if it takes place late in the morning. Of course, if you go to Holy Communion before, you must fast for that.

11. All who are to be confirmed must be in the church with their sponsors at least fifteen minutes before the celebration. They will go to their assigned places in procession and, meanwhile, they will avoid all unnecessary talk and noise. Remember: The place where you are is holy.

12. Every child to be confirmed will bring his prayer book with him; also the little card with his name and the name of the sponsor.

13. The Bishop enters the church giving his blessing; those who are to be confirmed will receive the blessing of the Bishop kneeling.

14. The Mass of Confirmation is said specially for those who are to be confirmed. All ought during Mass

to pray fervently for the gifts of the Holy Ghost; all ought to recommend themselves to the dear Mother of God and the Guardian Angel and pray: "O Mary, my Mother, pray for Thy child. My Holy Guardian Angel assist me."

15. The Bishop himself will give you a short instruction on Confirmation. Listen attentively and take his words of counsel to heart.

16. Immediately following the instruction is the administration of the Sacrament of the Holy Ghost. The Bishop at the altar solemnly invokes with outstretched arms the Holy Ghost to descend upon those to be confirmed. Meanwhile all who are to be confirmed are kneeling and praying fervently for the seven gifts of the Spirit.

17. The children to be confirmed come to the altar-rail in order, just as we have shown you; the Bishop then passes from one to the other.

18. When your turn comes, hold the card with both hands, like this, before you *(Show them how)*. One of the priests will take the card from you and read your baptismal name to the Bishop.

19. During the moment of Confirmation fold your hands devoutly and keep your eyes cast down. At the same time you might pray quietly: "Come, O come, Thou Comforter of my soul."

20. After the unction the Bishop makes the sign of the cross over the one confirmed; but the child, that has been confirmed should not make the sign of the cross.

21. The holy chrism may not be dishonored; therefore, one of the priests will wipe it off from the forehead of the child with a little cotton batting.

22. After Holy Confirmation wait for the signal; then arise together and return to your proper place in the church, slowly and with folded hands and eyes cast down.

23. Remain in your place in the pew quietly and thank the Holy Ghost with all your heart for the graces of Confirmation.

24. During the administration of the Sacrament the choir sings a hymn to the Holy Ghost. But you ought to pray with all the fervor of your soul.

25. If one of you should happen to get sick, you may go outside for a breath of fresh air. Then come back again as soon as possible; for no one that has been confirmed may miss the last solemn blessing of the Bishop.

26. Confirmation ends with the solemn prayer for those that have been confirmed and with the blessing of the Bishop. During this prayer and blessing all that have been confirmed should kneel and make the sign of the cross.

27. Let the entire day of Confirmation be for you a holy day. Therefore, avoid everything that might desecrate this day of grace.

28. It is right and fitting for your sponsors to invite you to dinner or for an excursion. But be temperate. If you have already eaten enough and the people try to force you to take more, just say: "I thank you; I have already had enough." *(A few words might be said here in regard to the custom of taking the pledge.)*

29. It is an old custom, that the sponsor for Confirmation gives a present to the one, for whom he has acted as sponsor. But be content with what you receive. The best present for Confirmation you receive from the Holy Ghost.

30. The afternoon ought not to be given over exclusively to entertainment. You are expected to come to the church at least for a quarter of an hour, to thank God again with all your heart for His graces.

31. In the evening return home in good season and end the day of grace with a good evening prayer.

32. St. Paul writes to his pupil Timothy (II Tim. i, 6): "I admonish thee, that thou stir up the grace of God, which is in thee by the imposition of my hands." That holds also for one that has been confirmed. Often think of the day of your Confirmation and frequently renew your promises: "I will live and die as a good Catholic Christian."

III.
PENANCE

LESSON XV.

Penance—A Gift of God.

Catechetical Unit:

1) When did Christ give the power of remitting sins? (Deharbe)
2) Did not Christ impart this power to the Apostles alone? (Deharbe)
3) How do you know that the priest has the power of absolving from the sins committed after Baptism? L. XVII, Q. 189.
4) How do the priests of the Church exercise the power of forgiving sins? L. XVII, Q. 190.
5) What is the Sacrament of Penance? L. XVII, Q. 187.
6) How does the Sacrament of Penance remit sin, and restore to the friendship of God? L. XVII, Q. 189.

Preparation. Dear children, how many Sacraments have you already received? In Holy Baptism you were made children of God. What sin was taken away from your soul at that time? If a person had other sins, actual sins, on his soul, would these also be forgiven by the Sacrament of Baptism? But I wonder whether all of you are still children of God? Perhaps one of you has already committed a mortal sin. O poor child! It is no longer a child of God. That is sad, indeed. But, thanks be to God, all is not yet lost; that child can still become a child of God again in the Holy Sacrament of Penance. From whom have we the Sacrament of Penance? Penance or Confession is a gift of God; we have received it from Jesus Himself. You see, therefore, that sins are forgiven through two Sacraments—Baptism and Penance. We profess our belief in this teaching in the tenth article of the Apostles' Creed: "I believe in the forgiveness of sins."

Aim. Now, I am going to explain to you: *how Jesus gave us the Holy Sacrament of Penance.*

Presentation. When Jesus was led away to death, a terrible fear laid hold of the Apostles. They no longer dared to go out into the streets, but rather remained gathered together in a room; the doors were closed fast and tight. It is already Easter Sunday. With dreadful anxiety they waited hour upon hour. It has become evening. All discouraged they said to one another: No, now He will not come any more; the Master has abandoned and forgotten us!

When all of a sudden it seemed as though a gentle breeze had passed over them, and—Jesus, transfigured like a bright heavenly figure, stands in the midst of His disciples. They are all paralyzed with fear. Terrified and trembling each one asks in his own heart: Who is this mysterious apparition? Then Jesus addresses them kindly, saying: "Peace be with you! Fear not; it is I! Behold My hands and feet. If I were a spirit I would not have flesh and bones as you see Me to have. But touch Me not." And He wanted to extend His hands to greet them. But in fear they drew back. Only after He had eaten before them were their eyes opened. Now they recognized the Divine Master and felt a childlike joy.

Soon Jesus took leave again from His disciples. Now just listen to His parting words: "Peace be with you. As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you." Then He breathed upon them and said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." Thereupon Jesus vanished from their sight. *(Show the pupils a large picture of this scene.)*

Explanation. A remarkable apparition. Memorable words of God. Let us consider very carefully what the Divine Saviour said and did.

1. At His departure Jesus greets His dear disciples: *"Peace be with you."* A beautiful salutation and indeed just the right salutation. Then He says: "As the Father hath sent Me, so also do I send you." Why did the Father send His Son into the world? By sin men lost peace with God; Jesus Christ brought us again this lost peace. How did that happen? On the cross Jesus reconciled us with His heavenly Father, so that God became friendly again with us. Christ came into the world as a Saviour and brought us peace. But very many fall again into sin and lose the peace of God. Who can help these poor sinners? Jesus told it to the Apostles: "So also do I send you." Do you now understand what Jesus means? What I have done, that you also are to do: You are to restore to poor sinners the lost peace of God.

2. But how can that be? Pay attention. In the story it is said: *then He breathed upon them.* Remarkable! What might that breathing mean? Jesus Himself told us that very plainly: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Yes, the Apostles received the Holy Ghost. But why? Listen to the great words of the Lord: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." Every child can understand that. Now the Apostles may forgive and retain sins. So it is. At that solemn evening hour Jesus conferred upon the Apostles the power of forgiving sins; He gave us the holy Sacrament of Penance. That is indeed an inestimable gift of God; we cannot thank the dear Saviour enough for it. For in holy Confession the poor sinner finds the lost peace again. Therefore, thanks to Thee, O Jesus, a thousand thanks for the Sacrament of peace and reconciliation! Let us then remember: *Christ gave the power of remitting sins when after His resurrection He breathed on His Apostles and said to them; "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain they are retained." (John xx,* 22-23). *(Repeat*

together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)

3. Now the Apostles were confessors; they had the power of forgiving sins in the Sacrament of Penance. But Peter died, and the other Apostles are dead; after a hundred years not a single one was alive any more. Did the power of absolving from sin also die? That cannot be. Jesus forsaw very clearly, that there would always be poor sinners; therefore there must also always be the power of absolution. Now how did Jesus provide, that the forgiveness of sins should never cease? The Apostles consecrated other pious men to be Bishops and priests, and these men succeeded them. To these successors in the office of the priesthood they gave the power of absolution. Now the priests have this holy inheritance. I, too, am a confessor. I have received the power of absolution from the Bishop at my ordination. You see, therefore, *Christ imparted the power of remitting sins also to all who were to succeed the Apostles in the priesthood, as the Church has always believed and taught. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

4. Now you can tell me why the priest has the power of absolving from sins. Our Catechism says: **I know that the priest has the power of absolving from sins committed after Baptism, because Jesus Christ granted that power to the priests of His Church, when He said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

5. But mark well! Jesus says expressly: You are *to forgive or to retain sins.* Do you suppose that the priest may forgive or retain sins, absolve or not absolve from sins, at random? No, the priest must first investigate and examine, and only then forgive or retain. But surely the priest cannot look into the heart of the sinner. What, therefore, must the sinner do? The sinner must first reveal his heart: he must con-

fess his sins to the priest. Thus did Christ command at the institution of Penance. You see then: **The priests of the Church exercise the power of forgiving sins by hearing the confession of sins.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Every priest has his power from Christ. I cannot of myself absolve from sins. No man can do that, neither can the Bishop nor even the Pope. The priest pronounces sentence in the confessional "in the name of God;" he can forgive sins only in the name of God, as the minister of God. Our Catechism says: The priests of the Church exercise the power of forgiving sins by hearing the confession of sins **and by granting pardon for them as ministers of God and in His name.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

6. Now you can easily tell me what Penance is. **Penance is a Sacrament in which the sins committed after Baptism are forgiven.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* You can remember that also by saying for short: Penance is the Sacrament of the forgiveness of sins.

7. Yes, when the priest, as God's minister and in God's name, speaks these solemn words: "I absolve thee from thy sins," Christ Himself blots out all sins and makes the sinner a friend of God. That is what we Catholics believe, because Jesus has said so and His Church has always taught that. What miraculous power is there not in the absolution of the priest! In the Catechism we read: **The Sacrament of Penance remits sins and restores the friendship of God by means of the absolution of the priest.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

1. Institution of the Sacrament of Penance—on Easter night.
2. Power of forgiveness—Apostles—Bishops and priests.
3. Forgiveness of sins—"Receive ye the Holy Ghost."

4. Priests exercise power of forgiveness—by hearing confession of sin—by granting pardon as ministers of God and in His name.
5. Penance—Sacrament of forgiveness of sins committed after Baptism: by absolution of priest (6).

Synthesis. Penance is a gift of God's love for us poor sinners. We know that and we are grateful for it. When did Christ institute this holy Sacrament? To whom did Christ give this power of forgiving sins? Who has that power now? How do you know that? When do the priests exercise that power? What is Penance? How does Penance restore the friendship of God? *(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. Christ said to His Apostles: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost"—and then He conferred upon them the power of forgiving sins. The Bishop acts in the same manner at ordination to the Holy Priesthood. Now tell me: Could your father forgive you your sins? Or your mother? Or your teacher? They did not receive the Holy Ghost for the forgiving of sins, and consequently they cannot do it. Even though a person were a Saint, he could not do it, if he is not a priest. And if the Archangel Raphael were to come down from Heaven—he certainly is mighty and holy—he could not forgive the smallest sin. (With Protestants there is no priesthood. But their ministers would like very much to forgive the sins of the people. Why can they not do it? They have no power for that; they are not confessors.)

2. The confessor takes God's place. Let us suppose, that in one confessional was the Apostle Peter and in another a simple priest. Who can absolve better? The priest can absolve just as well as the Apostle. Peter has the power of absolving from Christ; the priest has it also from Christ, but through the Bishop.

Confessions of children are just being heard. There are three confessors present: a priest and the Bishop —and Christ. To whom would you go to confession? You imagine, that perhaps Christ would be the best confessor, for He can do it best of all. That is indeed true; Jesus can forgive sins of Himself, because He is God. But the Bishop and the priest can absolve you just as well; for they do it in the name of Christ. No absolution is better and holier.

3. Jesus greets His Apostles with the sweet words: "Peace be with you." Oftentimes Jesus has said to you: "Peace be with you. Go in peace, thy sins are forgiven thee." Then you felt happy at heart. Yes, rejoice and give thanks.

LESSON XVI.

(Supplementary)

The Duty of Confession.

Catechetical Unit:

1) Why must we confess our sins in order to have them forgiven?
2) Is the Sacrament of Penance necessary for salvation to all those who have sinned?
3) Can all sins be forgiven by the Sacrament of Penance?

(N. B. The duty of confessing one's sins has already been briefly touched upon in the preceding lesson. Since, however, the children will later on come into contact with people of other beliefs, a more complete exposition of this obligation ought to be given by the catechist. We add, therefore, the following questions and answers, which are taken from *"A Full Catechism of the Catholic Religion,"* by Jos. Deharbe, S. J.; revised, enlarged and edited by the Rt. Rev. P. N. Lynch, D.D.; pp. 276. Schwartz, Kirwin & Fauss, New York.)

Preparation. Dear children, a certain venerable religious teacher (Segneri) says the following in regard to Penance: "Heaven is our country, the earth is the

land of our exile. Who can doubt, that we must tend continually towards that country, where our inheritance is? But there lies between it and us a tempestuous sea. It is the sea of our earthly life. To cross this sea we need a ship. The proper ship, that God once assigned for this purpose, was *innocence* in which joyfully and with glad hearts we would have arrived in safety on the shore of our true home. But unfortunately, this ship was dashed to pieces in that unhappy shipwreck, which in Adam all his children likewise have suffered. And thus nothing is left except that each one must cling firmly to *Penance*, which, therefore, is called the plank of refuge after the shipwreck." Let us review this teaching. *(Question the pupils briefly on the preceding lesson.)*

Penance is a gift of God. We must be heartily grateful for it. But many Christians do not want to confess their sins. Others say: I confess my sins to the good God. Protestants do that. They have only a "general confession" and no private or "auricular confession;" that is, a confession spoken privately to a priest.

Aim. But it is God's will, *that we confess our sins to the priest.* That is what I am going to show you today. But first listen to how some Protestants confess.

Presentation. A congregation of Protestant Christians is gathered together in the church. Divine services are just being conducted: sermon, prayer and singing. They have not the Holy Mass. But sometimes they celebrate the Lord's Supper. On such occasions they first confess their sins; all pray together in this manner: "Almighty God, merciful Father! I, a poor sinful man, confess to Thee all my sins and misdeeds, with which I have ever offended Thee and deserved Thy temporal and eternal punishments. I am heartily sorry for them and I repent of them exceedingly, and I beg Thee for Thy boundless mercy sake

and for the sake of the bitter sufferings of Thy dear and innocent Son, Jesus Christ, to forgive me all my sins, and make me strong by Thy Spirit, so that I may amend my sinful life and be converted to Thee in truth. O my God, I hope in Thy grace; have mercy on me and grant me Thy peace. Amen."

Thus do they pray. Thereupon their minister announces from the pulpit: "Go in peace; your sins are forgiven you." Now the confession is finished.

Explanation. 1. To confess in that way is easy, is it not? But I wonder whether it is also right? That is a Confession-prayer, but it is not Confession. We Catholics also have a prayer, in which we confess all together—the public confession: "Confiteor—I confess to Almighty God, to Blessed Mary ever Virgin, etc., that I have sinned through my fault, through my fault, through my exceedingly great fault." But we have also a Confession, in which each one alone must tell his sins to the priest. And that is what Christ wills. We shall see that immediately.

A person is brought before the court. Now how is the trial conducted? May the judge at once condemn or acquit the defendant? That would be entirely unjust. The judge must first investigate, whether the accused person, the defendant, is guilty or innocent; only then can he judge. First the charge is made. Then the judge asks the accused person about everything. Thereupon the witnesses are also called up; they must conscientiously tell all that they know about the matter. Finally, after the judge has heard all, he pronounces sentence. If the man is innocent he is set free; but if he is guilty, he receives punishment.

It is very much like that in confession. There, too, a trial is held. We may call it the court of Confession —the tribunal of Penance. The accused person is the sinner, the *judge* is the priest. Thus has Christ ordained. For He said, you are "to forgive or to retain." Do you suppose that the priest may forgive or

retain sins, absolve or not absolve, at random, according to his own sweet will? That would not be right. No, the priest must act as the judge: first he must investigate, then judge—forgive or retain. But the priest cannot, of course, look into the heart of the sinner. What, therefore, must the sinner do? The sinner must first lay bare his heart to the confessor, he must confess his sins to the priest. Who, then, is right, we Catholics or the Protestants? **We must first confess our sins in order to have them forgiven, because Christ ordained it so when He instituted the Sacrament of Penance. We prove it by His own words: "Whose sins you shall forgive," etc., for unless we declare our sins and the whole state of our soul, to the priest, he cannot know whether he is to forgive or to retain them.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)* With Protestants where is the judge? They cannot forgive or retain. Without Confession there is no absolution.

2. To confess is necessary. We can easily show that also in another way. Here is a sick child. Now the doctor comes; what does he do? First he asks: My child, tell me, what is the matter with you? Where do you feel pain? Then he examines the sick body and prescribes the medicine, so that the child may soon improve.

The sinner is also sick; yes, oftentimes his soul is sick unto death. But the priest is the *physician of the soul;* he is to heal the soul, that is dangerously ill. But then he must first know where the sinner is sick; therefore, the sinner must confess. The confessor ought also to prescribe for the penitent a medicine for the soul, a penance for sins. But what penance?—a small or a great penance? That depends upon the sickness of the soul; for small sins a small penance, for great sins a great penance. There you see again; we must confess our sins to the priest.

With Protestants where is the physician of the soul? They have none. Sick people, poor sinners they have

in abundance; but no one can help them. We must heartily pity them; surely they are poor in this regard. For, if they die in their sins, they will be lost forever. To be sure, the most of them do not know any better; therefore, God will be gracious and merciful to them. But there are also Catholics, who do not want to confess, and yet they have sins upon their souls, sins as heavy as a millstone. For them there is no mercy. For neither will God pardon a person, who is unwilling to confess; such a one loses the kingdom of Heaven. Consequently, **the Sacrament of Penance is necessary for salvation to all those who have committed grievous sin after Baptism.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. Now you will be better able to understand, how grateful we must be to the dear Saviour for His words "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them." Yes, Confession is a sweet consolation for the heart of every sinner. And yet, Protestants do not want to have anything to do with it. But here a doubt arises in my mind: Do the words of the Lord hold good for all sins? There are such awful sins, that they are punished with death. But Jesus has made no exceptions, but rather He has said: "Whose *sins* you shall forgive, they are forgiven them." So it remains; no one may do violence to the words of the Lord and misinterpret them. God demands only *one thing* and upon that does He insist: the sinner must be disposed to penance. To repent of sin and then to amend one's life and do penance: that is called having the *disposition of repentance* in one's heart. Whoever confesses like that, can be saved, even though he may have been as wicked as the thief and murderer on the cross and the betrayer Judas or the sinner Magdalen and the enemy of Christ, Saul. **All sins we have committed after Baptism can be forgiven, if we confess them with the necessary disposition of repentance.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Our dear Lord Himself has said so: "If your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow: and if they be red as crimson, they shall be as white as wool" (Isaias i, 18). And again God says: "If the wicked do penance for all his sins, living he shall live, and shall not die. I will not remember all his iniquities that he hath done" (Ezechiel xviii, 21s). If the good God speaks like that, no man can speak otherwise.

Write on the blackboard:

1. Duty of Confession
   a) to forgive and to retain sins;
   b) Priest—judge, physician of soul.
2. Duty of Confession—for all who commit mortal sin.
3. Forgiveness of all sins—disposition of repentance necessary.

Synthesis. What we have learned today is very important for the life of a Christian: to confess is the duty of a Christian. Why must we confess our sins? Is the Sacrament of Penance necessary for salvation for all? But to confess is also a sweet consolation for the heart of the sinner. Can all sins be forgiven? *(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. A person says: "I confess my sins *to God in secret.*" Who can now give the correct answer to this objection?—God does indeed already know your sins. But Jesus has said to His Apostles: You are to forgive or to retain sins. The priest is to *judge;* but then the sinner must confess. (Already 1500 years ago there were people who did not like to confess. In answer to that St. Augustine said: "Let no one say to himself: I do my penance in secret before God; God knows that I repent of my sins from all my heart; He

will also forgive me. Did Christ, then, say in vain: Whatsover you shall lose upon earth, is loosed also in Heaven? Whoever speaks like that, takes away from Christ's words all their power and meaning.")

2. God wants Confession. We see that already in the case of the first sin. God said: "Adam, where art thou?" Why did God ask? He wanted to see whether Adam would confess his sin. God also asked Cain: "Where is thy brother Abel?" God knew all; but Cain, the murderer of his brother, ought to confess. Of course, the stubborn fellow did not want to confess. The first Christians also confessed. We read of that in the Acts of the Apostles. In the city of Ephesus some Christians had been guilty of certain superstitious practices. St. Paul preached them a severe sermon for that conduct. Then many of the faithful came and confessed what they had been doing. (xix, 18). Do you see? They confessed their sins. Now, too, all Christians must confess — the priest, too, and the Bishop and the Pope. There is no exception here; before God we are all equal, we all are poor sinners.

3. Perhaps later on you might hear it said: "The priests have invented Confession."—It is indeed true: someone has invented Confession, but is was not man; it was rather God's Son, Jesus Christ. We cannot be thankful enough for that. Many a poor sinner has not a single quiet hour any longer, until the poison of sin is removed from his soul. Here it is just like on a railway train, when a spark flies into your eye; that spark must come out no matter what the cost, otherwise you will not have any rest any longer, or you may even lose your eye. Of course, to confess is confusing and causes shame, especially when one has committed a very detestable sin. Many a one for that very reason ceases to commit sin, because he thinks to himself: I will have to confess that sin. But it is better to be ashamed now, than some day to stand in shame before God and His Holy Angels.

LESSON XVII.

The Graces of Confession.

(Supplementary)

Catechetical Unit:

Which are the effects of the Sacrament of Penance?

(N. B. The effects of the Sacrament of Penance have already been alluded to briefly in Lesson XV. Since, however, this teaching is of such vast importance, the catechist must endeavor to impress the salutary effects of Confession upon the pupils in as clear and complete a manner as possible. Hence we supplement the Baltimore Catechism by the question and answer of our unit, which is taken from Deharbe's Catechism.)

Preparation. Dear children, all Catholics of the whole world, who are worthy of the name, have the custom of frequently confessing their sins to a priest. This custom did not originate only a few years ago, but has always existed; that is, ever since the Catholic Church exists, this custom also has existed. Already in the fifth century St. John Chrysostom, a great Bishop of the Church, wrote these words: "Let us, therefore, imitate the Samaritan woman and let us not fear man (that is, the priests) in the confession of our sins, but let us fear God, who sees our evil deeds and will later on punish those, who refuse to do penance now. Let us not be ashamed to confess our sins; for great is the virtue of confession and strong its power." So we might show from the writings of the holy Fathers of the Church and from Church History, that this custom of confessing one's sins to a priest has always existed in the Church. Now surely if this practice has always been in the Church from the very beginning, from whom could it have come? From no one except from Christ, the Lord. Why?—1. It would be possible to tell the name of the man, who invented Confession, also when and where it was first introduced. But no one can give any traces as to whom, or where or when Confession was first introduced. Then 2. no man could have in-

vented it. Because the Christian people would not have allowed it. It is not a very pleasant thing to confess one's sins to a priest. Now if a Pope, or Bishop, or priest had suddenly commanded: Henceforth every one, who wishes to be saved, must confess his sins to a priest—what would have happened? The people would not have obeyed that order; on the contrary, they would have said: You are inventing something new in the Church. Our fathers did not go to Confession, and yet they went to Heaven; we too can be saved without Confession. Moreover, the Bishops would not have allowed such a false teaching to be spread among the faithful, for they are appointed by Christ to teach His truths and to prevent any errors from arising in the Church. You see, then, that if no man could have invented that custom, and if this practise has always been in the Church from the days of the Apostles, it could have come only from Christ Himself. Yes, so it is, as we learned in the last class. *(Question the pupils briefly on the preceding lesson.)*

We *must* confess our sins; God wills it. But I prefer to say: We *may* confess our sins. Yes, for Holy Confession we cannot be grateful enough. Do you know why?—

Aim. You will easily understand that, if I show you: *what graces the penitent receives from God.*— But first a little story of a great sinner.

Presentation. Once there was a hotel-keeper, an old sinner. He took no delight in prayer, but as for cursing he had no equal. For a long time he had not seen the inside of a church. He took no time to go to church; his business was much dearer to him. Every Friday he enjoyed his meat just as on other days; he thought to himself: "What does Friday concern me?" Many another heavy load he had on his conscience. But this is enough.

Suddenly, however, he became very serious and began to think over the past. "Things cannot continue

to go on like this any longer," he said to himself; "I must become a different man again, otherwise I will be lost. Tomorrow I will go to Confession." No sooner said than done.

Early in the morning he seated himself upon his horse, and hastened away to the nearest monastery. However, the nearer he came to his destination, the heavier did his heart become. Again and again the thought tortured him: "But what will the confessor say, if I have so many and such grievous sins?" Already he was at the door of the monastery. Suddenly a deathly fear of Confession came over him, and he was about to turn back. But luckily one of the fathers had seen him and surmised: "He must have something on his heart." Kindly he called out to him: "Say, dear friend, be a man; just come in!" Then the poor sinner took new courage, and willingly as a little lamb he allowed himself to be led to the confessional. He began to confess, and it took a long time before everything came out, and such sorrow did he feel in his soul, that he was almost at the point of weeping aloud. But when the priest spoke the holy words: "I absolve thee from thy sins," he felt very happy at heart. "Thanks be to God!" he exclaimed, "that all is over." He received Holy Communion, performed his devotions and then he turned homeward.

On the way home he stroked his faithful horse and said: "So, dear little horse, now you are carrying a few hundred pounds less." From that hour he lead a model Christian life. And when his time came to die, he had this message sent to that priest: "Since that Confession I have not committed a single serious sin willingly."

Explanation. 1. That man had been a wicked sinner. How do you suppose his soul looked?—His soul was filled with detestable filth, as though soiled with the rubbish of Hell. The good God felt a real nausea at that soul; with detestation the holy Angels turned

their faces away from it. It is very fortunate, that the poor sinner could not see his own soul; I believe, that he would have died for fear of that sight.—But the sinner was converted; he heartily repented of his sinful life, confessed all sincerely and wanted to amend his life and become a different man. Then the priest spoke the consoling and redeeming words: "I absolve thee from thy sins." At that moment something very wonderful took place.—The soul of that sinner was washed clean in the Blood of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God; removed was all the filth of sin, the soul was pure again from sin. God forgave the sinner everything, all mortal and venial sins.—Do you see? That is the first great grace of Confession: **The Sacrament of Penance remits the sins committed after Baptism.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

2. a) If that man had died in his sins, where would he be now?—Only with fear and trembling can one think of it: His sins would have dragged his soul down into the abyss of Hell; there it would have been buried forever in a sea of fire. Yes, Hell is open to him, who commits mortal sin. Already the wicked spirits lie in wait for his destruction; they stand at his death-bed ready to seize the soul, just as soon as it departs from the body, and to drag it down into the eternal fire. So, too, would it have happened to that poor sinner. But things turned out differently. The sinner received holy absolution; now he was also absolved from *eternal punishment. (Use the blackboard.)* Now Hell was closed and Heaven was opened. Do you see? God remitted the eternal punishment (of Hell). So it always happens in Confession: if mortal sin is taken away, then also eternal punishment is taken away.

b) But if that man had died after confession, would his soul also have entered into Heaven immediately?—I think not. Generally God changes the eternal punishment into a temporal punishment, the fire of Hell into

the fire of Purgatory. Most probably his soul would have been obliged to burn and suffer in Purgatory; but of course only for a time. Therefore we call Purgatory *temporal punishment.* Perhaps the man of our story had also to suffer much on earth; that too was a temporal punishment, an earthly Purgatory.—One thing more: The sinner deserved Purgatory also for his venial sins. Do you suppose that God absolved him also from these sins?—Most probably not entirely; generally God remits only a part of the temporal punishment. That is the second great grace of Confession: it remits *at least a part of the temporal punishment due to our sins. (Use the blackboard.)*

Let us put the two parts together: **The Sacrament of Penance remits the eternal, and at least a part of the temporal, punishment due to our sins.** *(Repeat tobether.)*

3. a) Now the man of our story was free from sins; that is a great grace. But the most beautiful grace is still to come: his soul was also made wonderfully beautiful. At the moment of absolution the Holy Ghost, the Divine Dispenser of grace, came and wrapped the soul in the shining garment of grace. Filled with admiration the Angels saw it and said to one another: "See! how beautiful the soul has become through the grace of God." Yes, the soul was almost as beautiful again as after Holy Baptism; for it has *received again the grace, which it had lost* through mortal sin. *(Use the blackboard.)*

b) But frequently it happens, that the penitent comes to Confession with only venial sins upon his soul. Such a person is still in God's grace; for venial sin does not deprive the soul of sanctifying grace. Venial sin does indeed spot and soil the white garment of God's grace, but it does not take that garment away entirely from the soul. Only mortal sin does that. Now what happens to the soul in Confession, when it is stained only by venial sins?—I will tell you. When the priest speaks the words of absolution over such a

soul, God gives that soul more sanctifying grace. He makes that soul appear more beautiful and pleasing by increasing sanctifying grace. You see, then, that the absolution of the priest *increases sanctifying grace, if it is not lost. (Use the blackboard.)*

Let us repeat the whole answer together: **The Sacrament of Penance restores, or, if it is not lost, it increases sanctifying grace.**

4. But that is not all yet. Just think of the words of jest, which the hotel-keeper spoke to his faithful horse.—He meant to say: I feel as though several hundred pounds had been taken from my heart. Do you see? He had peace and happiness again in his soul. And now everything became easy for him: praying and fasting and going to church. Yes, so conscientiously did that man live, that he did not ever again commit a single mortal sin willingly. Whence this pious Christian life? Alone he could never have accomplished it; God gave him special graces in Confession for that purpose.—**The Sacrament of Penance also confers other particular graces to enable us to lead a holy life.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

The graces of Confession:

God *forgives*

1) sins;
2) the eternal punishment;
3) the temporal punishment (entirely?)

God *gives*

1) lost grace, or increases grace, if it is not lost by mortal sin;
2) special graces to lead a holy life.

Synthesis. Wonderfully does holy absolution work in the heart of the sinner. After Confession man is as though new-born, regenerated. Great things are *forgiven* him: sin and punishment—great things are *given* him besides—God's grace. Which are the effects

of the Sacrament of Penance?—Show me that again from our story!—*(Have the pupils read the answer from the Catechism or blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. On old confessionals one often sees beautiful pictures: Peter, Magdalen, the prodigal son. Why?—That is easy to understand.—Or one sees a little sheep caught among the thorns; it cannot help itself any longer and would surely have had to perish miserably. But the shepherd kneels down and loosens the poor little sheep from the thorns; then he lays it joyfully on his shoulders and carries it back to the flock. What does that picture tell us? — The little sheep is the poor sinner. He has become entangled in the thorn bush of sin and cannot help himself any more; he would have had to perish without a doubt. But then Jesus comes, the Good Shepherd. In Holy Confession He frees the poor sinner from the thorns of sin and adopts him again as His child and carries him back to the heavenly Father. Do you see the graces of Confession?—

One can also at times see the picture of the raising of Lazarus from the grave. You know the story very well, do you not?—That picture has a beautiful meaning. Christ called into the grave with a loud voice: "Lazarus, come forth!" Then the dead man arose and lived.—Whoever has committed mortal sin, has death in his soul; he lies, as it were, buried in the grave of sin. But the priest gives him holy absolution in the name of Christ. Then the sinner arises and lives: he has received again the life of grace in his soul. There we have the graces of Confession again.—

2. You all were one day raised up from death to life—in Holy Baptism. At that time your soul received the precious heavenly garment of grace. Have you preserved it? Be vigilant! Many people say: "O! if only I had died as a child." Then you would indeed have died as a child of grace and would have

entered Heaven, but only the Heaven of children. But now you are able to enter the Heaven of the Saints; and the Heaven of the Saints is more beautiful than the Heaven of the children. Only remain always a child of God's grace.

(N. B. The graces of Confession might also be deduced without a special presentation from the parable of the prodigal son. Hence where one is pressed for time, this shorter way might be recommended. We append a short sketch showing how this instruction could be treated.)

Presentation. The kind reception of the prodigal son by his father is reviewed briefly.

Explanation. 1. The father embraces and kisses the son; the sign of reconciliation. The father has forgiven the guilt of the son.—At the moment of absolution the heavenly Father embraces the sinner and forgives him his whole guilt: *the soul is made clean from sins.*

2. The prodigal son wants to serve his father as a servant; for he knows that he deserves punishment. But the good father has a ring given his son as a sign: Now thou art my son again! He also remits the punishment of this ungrateful son.—Then, too, does God pardon the sinner the punishment he owes: *the soul is made free from the punishment due its sins:*—from eternal punishment entirely, from temporal punishment, at least in part.

3. The father calls out to his servants: "Bring forth quickly the first robe, and put it on him" (Luke xv, 22).—Thus does the heavenly Father also say: "Bring the heavenly garment quickly!" Then the Holy Ghost —the Angels are His servants—covers the soul with the precious heavenly *garment of grace.*

4. The father also says: "Put shoes upon his feet!" With good shoes one can walk well.—In Confession the sinner also receives new shoes, that is, new helps of God, so that he can advance again by a pious Christian life, go forward on the way to Heaven. *The*

soul becomes rich in graces: it receives the grace that was lost and besides that also special graces for a pious life.

Application. The same as in the preceding lesson.

LESSON XVIII.

Requisites for a Worthy Reception of Penance.

Catechetical Unit:

What must we do to receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily? L. XVII, Q. 191.

Preparation. Dear children, in an old story book one can read of a certain wonderful fountain. It says: Whoever bathes in that fountain, will be made well at once from every sickness. But he that is old and ugly, will become young again and beautiful; even the dead will be raised again to life immediately—If there really were such a bath, such a health resort, how from all parts of the world the sick, the old, the ugly would hasten thither, how from all quarters men would bring even the dead there!

Now of course, there is no such bath for the body, no such health-resort; but, dear children, I do know of such a bath for the *soul.* Yes indeed! every human soul, that frequents this health-resort, that enters into this bath, is made well at once from all sickness, namely from sin, and becomes beautiful and young again; yes, it will receive again the life of grace and hence eternal life, if it has lost that life by mortal sin. You know what I mean: The Sacrament of Penance is indeed the fountain of youth, the health-resort of the soul. Let us review this teaching. *(Question the pupils briefly on the foregoing lesson.)*

We receive the Sacrament of Penance, when we confess. But between Confession and Confession there is

a great difference. Only he that confesses *well* and *worthily,* receives forgiveness of sin and the graces of the Sacrament. There are bad and disobedient children. Instead of giving joy to their father and mother, they only cause them heart-ache and embitter their life. At home in the house of their parents such children do not feel very happy and content; they imagine, that it is much better with strangers. But when they get in need and misery, they begin to complain: "Oh! if only I had remained at home with my good parents. Father and mother really meant it well with me! But now I am abandoned; no one wants me; no one wants to help me!"

Aim. Jesus once told us an incomparably beautiful parable about just such a wicked son—the parable of the prodigal son. First I am going to tell you this parable. From it we can learn: (1) *How good the dear Lord is to us poor sinners, and* (2) *what a person needs to make a good Confession.*

Presentation. A man had two sons. The younger said to his father: "Father, give me the portion of my inheritance, that falleth to me." The father divided unto him his substance. Not many days after the younger son, gathering all together, went abroad into a far country; and there he wasted his substance living riotously.

After he had spent all, there came a mighty famine in all that country, and he began to be in want. What was he to do now? In his need he went to one of the citizens of that country and hired out with him. And he sent him into his farm to feed the swine. Here he would have liked to fill his belly with the husks the swine did eat: and no man gave them to him. Oh! how quickly everything changed!

Now he entered into himself and said: "How many hired servants in my father's house abound with bread, and I here perish with hunger? I will arise and will go to my father, and say to him: Father, I

have sinned against Heaven and before thee! I am not worthy now to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants." And rising up he came to his father.

The father saw him when he was yet a far way off and was moved with compassion. He ran to him, fell upon his neck and kissed him. But the son said to him: "Father! I have sinned against Heaven and before thee. I am not now worthy to be called thy son!" But the father said to his servants: "Bring forth quickly the first robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and make merry. Because this my son was dead, and is come to life again: was lost and is found!" *(Show the pupils a large picture of this scene.)*

Explanation.

A. God's Love and Mercy for the Sinner.

Now I am going to explain this parable to you.—The younger son demanded his share of his inheritance from his father. (He had a claim to a third part of the possessions.) What do you suppose he thought to himself?—Then I shall be free; my father cannot say anything against me; I shall not have to work any longer and can eat and drink to my heart's content! The father did as the son desired. But how his heart must have bled at the same time: Poor son! You will yet realize what you are doing; you will have to repent for this. How glad you will be, if you are allowed to return to your father's house!

Now the son was rich. He lived carelessly from day to day, worked no longer, prayed no more; only to eat and drink and enjoy himself, as though every day were a wedding day, that was his only labor. But how quickly did not things change! What happened?—Do you see? Before he was a rich man in fine clothing and now—a beggar in dirty and torn clothing; before he had food and drink in abundance and now—the

feed given to the swine would have been good enough for him. What was he to do? He can not help himself. Then he arises; he wants to return to his father. But what will my father say? Will he pardon me? Will he turn me out: Away, you good for nothing fellow, I will have nothing further to do with you! Ever greater does his fear become, the nearer he comes to his father's house. But what is that? Why the father is coming! Yes, the love of the father, for his son does not allow him rest any longer; again and again does he seek the lost son. Finally he sees him coming in the distance. "Yes, it is he!" Then he cannot wait any longer; he runs forward to meet him, as fast as his old feet can carry him, embraces him, kisses him and weeps for joy: My son, I am glad that you are here again! The father had forgiven him all. How do you know that?—The son receives a festive garment and a ring and shoes; and moreover, a festive meal is prepared. Dear children, a good father is he not?

But the parable is only the shell. We must now take out the kernel. Pay attention to what Jesus wishes to teach you!

Who, do you suppose, is that good father?—It is God, the heavenly Father; but the prodigal son is he that commits mortal sin. Such a one no longer wants to remain with God; he prefers to run after evil and wastes his entire inheritance: the heavenly garment of grace and the right to Heaven and all merits. Thus he becomes as poor as a beggar and cannot help himself any longer:—he is the prodigal son. Then he returns, full of contrition, to God. What will the heavenly Father say? Will he turn him out? To be sure, sin did grieve the good God; but He is ready to pardon all and full of joy He says to His angels: "This my son was dead and is become alive again; he was lost and is found again."—Do you see? Children, God is the best of Fathers. God is merciful; He pardons gladly all truly repentant sinners. Full of love and

mercy He is waiting for you. Therefore do not fear, but rejoice that you are allowed to go to Holy Confession!

Now I am going to show you briefly, *what the penitent needs for a good Confession.*

B. The Prodigal Son—A Model for the Penitent.

1. In his misery the prodigal son entered into himself. What does that mean?—I believe, that he thought again of God and began to pray; for necessity teaches one to pray. (Therefore he wanted to say to his father: "I have sinned against *Heaven.")*—The penitent must also first think of God and pray. Without prayer one cannot confess well. For Confession one needs God's blessing. Remember, then: *Pray before Confession! (Use the blackboard.)*

2. The prodigal son *entered into himself;* there is something else contained in these words.—He also thought over his past life: How happy I was at home with my father and how miserable I am now! How good was not my father to me, and how have I acted to my father! Do you see? Now suddenly his conscience began to stir.—The penitent must also enter into himself. You must think over all the evil that you have done; you must look into your conscience and examine it; you must think earnestly, so that all your sins may come to your mind. That is the second thing: The penitent must call to mind the evil that he has done. Our Catechism says: To receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily **we must examine our conscience.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. But it is not enough to think of one's sins; the chief thing is to feel sorry for having sinned. The prodigal son felt sorry in his heart for having been so wicked and ungrateful. Therefore he wanted to say: "Father! I am now not worthy any longer to be called thy son." And then when he sat there with his herd of swine so lonely and forsaken in the field, I believe, that he wept bitterly many a time. What do those

tears tell you?—He had contrition in his heart.—The penitent also needs contrition. You all have already had contrition. How did you feel then at heart? The evil, which you did, grieved and hurt you in your soul, did it not, and you thought or said: "Oh! if only I had not done that." That is contrition for sin. To receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily **we must have sorrow for our sins.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

4. But contrition is not yet sufficient. Just think of the prodigal son! He said to himself: "I will arise and go to my father!" He meant: I know indeed, that I have grieved my father's heart terribly. But my father is so good, and I am after all his child; he will not reject me. Do you see? He had a childlike confidence or trust. And what did he resolve to do at the same time?—If my father receives me again, I will become an entirely different man; never again will I cause him such sorrow: that is my firm resolution.—Thus also must the penitent resolve to do: I am going to become a different person. Henceforth I am going to be a good child of God and I will not grieve my Father in Heaven any more. That is the good resolution to sin no more: I will amend my life in all earnestness. To receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily **we must make a firm resolution never more to offend God.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

5. With a heavy heart the prodigal son returned to his home. Scarcely did he see his father, when he fell down at his feet and said: "Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee. I am now not worthy to be called thy son any longer." Do you see? Now he had confessed his grievous fault to his father; but the father forgave his repentant son all his guilt.—In just the same way must the penitent kneel down before his heavenly Father and tell all his sins openly to the confessor. Then God also will be ready to forgive and He will say in a very fatherly manner: My dear child! Let us remember, therefore: The penitent must sin-

cerely confess his sins. Yes, to receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily **we must confess our sins to the priest.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

6. The prodigal son also said to his father: "Father! make me as one of they hired servants." But why serve as a hired servant? He knew very well: Even though my father does forgive me, all is not yet over; I caused much grief of heart to my father, and I must also do penance for that.—Likewise all is not over after Confession. The penitent must also do penance, or make satisfaction. Therefore he receives a penance from the confessor. This penance is also called satisfaction: The sinner ought to do so much, that it is sufficient in God's sight. To receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily **we must accept the penance which the priest gives us.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

To receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily we must:

1) pray to the Holy Ghost for light;
2) examine our conscience;
3) feel sorry for our sins (have contrition);
4) resolve to amend our life;
5) confess to the priest;
6) perform the penance imposed.

Synthesis. The prodigal son is a model for the penitent. The prodigal son entered into himself and began to pray again; the penitent too must *pray* before Confession. The prodigal son thought over his life; the penitent too must think over his sins or *examine his conscience.* The prodigal son felt sorry for his wicked life; the penitent too must *repent* of his sins. The prodigal son wanted to begin a new life; the penitent too must earnestly *resolve to amend* his life. The prodigal son confessed his sins to his father; the penitent too must *confess* his sins to the confessor. The prodigal son wanted to become a hired servant and so do penance; the penitent too must *do penance* after

Confession. These are the six requirements for the worthy reception of the Sacrament of Penance. Now tell me: What must we do to receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily?—*(Have the pupils read the answer from the Catechism. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. Think again of the prodigal son! He never felt happy in his misery; he no longer had a single peaceful hour. Something drove him by force, as it were, to his father's house and his father's heart. And when the good father lovingly pressed him to his heart and kissed him, he was all beside himself with joy.

So too does it happen to many a sinner. He is never happy in his sins; nowhere does he find peace for his poor soul. Finally he goes to Confession. The confessor absolves him from his sins. At that moment the heavenly Father gives him the kiss of peace. Now the penitent may say again with all his heart and pray: "Our Father!" O! how happy the sinner feels at heart. Many a one would like to weep for joy.—All of you have already done wrong. Did you not feel, how sin gnaws into the soul? It is like a greedy worm. But rejoice, your heart can be set at rest in Holy Penance. Pray each day for the grace of always making a good Confession. Say one Our Father for that special intention. The dear Lord will bless your good will.

LESSON XIX.

Examination of Conscience.

Catechetical Unit:

1) What must we do before the examination of conscience? L. XVII, Q. 194.
2) How can we make a good examination of conscience? L. XVII, Q. 193.

3) What is the examination of conscience? L. XVII, Q. 192.

4) Against what faults are we to guard in the examination of conscience? (Deharbe)

Preparation. Dear children, from the story of the prodigal son we learned the lesson: What must we do in order to receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily? Let us review this teaching. *(Question the pupils briefly on the foregoing lesson.)*—In this story it is said of the prodigal son: "He entered into himself." What is the meaning of that?—He thought about his wicked life: what he had done to his good father and how he had wasted his money simply in feasting and drinking and gambling. Now all that weighed heavily upon his heart.—Like the prodigal son, so, also, the sinner must think over his life: the penitent must examine his conscience so that all his sins may come into his mind. About that we are to learn now—about the *examination of conscience.* You are perhaps a little curious as to how that can be done. Just pay strict attention! You ought to consider it a matter of honor—to learn how to confess well.

Aim.—First I am going to tell you how a good boy prepared himself for his First Holy Confession.

Preparation. Easter was near. In a few days the children were to be permitted to go to First Holy Confession. All were happy because of it. To have one's heart made pure from sin and to obtain the heavenly garment of grace and to be made a child of God—who would not rejoice over that! To be sure, many a penitent was afraid and asked himself anxiously: I wonder will I do all things properly?

So, too, a certain good boy felt. But then he said to himself: I am going to pray, pray very fervently; then the good God will surely help me. That very same evening he went into the church. No one was there but the dear Saviour. Very kindly just like the

friendly evening star the sanctuary lamp shone before the tabernacle, as though it wished to say: Child, come here! Here your Jesus lives. The boy knelt down before the altar and prayed with all his heart: "O dear Jesus! I am a poor, sinful child. But I want, Oh! so very much, to confess well; give me Thy blessing!" Then he continued to pray as he had learned in school: "Come, O Holy Ghost, enlighten my mind, that I may know my sins; and move my heart that I may properly repent of them, sincerely confess them, and truly amend my life. O Mary, my Mother, give me Thy blessing! Holy Guardian Angel, assist me!"

Thus did the boy pray. Now he commenced to think. That was not so very difficult; for the catechist had already explained everything well. He called to mind his past life, as far as he was able, and then he asked himself: What sins did I commit against the first Commandment of God? How did I sin against the second Commandment? Thus did he go through all the Commandments of God one after the other; besides that also the Commandments of the Church and the seven capital sins. Nearly everywhere did he find some little fault. For almost an hour he examined his conscience and remembered all his sins and was heartily sorry for them.

Finally the day for Confession arrived. The boy began to confess; but the heart of the little sinner beat violently at the same time. However, the confessor was kind and good as Jesus, the Divine Friend of little children. And so quickly all anxiety was gone. When the priest gave him holy absolution for the first time, this little penitent felt as light and happy in his soul as the prodigal son in the arms of his father.

Explanation. 1. Do you think that the good God was satisfied?—The boy wanted to confess. But he knew very well: Alone I cannot do it right; God must help me to think, to repent, to amend and to confess. Therefore he began the examination of conscience by

calling upon, invoking, the Holy Ghost. That is right: Before Confession you ought *to pray.*

The Divine Saviour once related the story of a woman who had lost a drachme (a coin). She took a light and a broom and looked through the whole house; she turned the light into every corner and swept everywhere, until finally the lost coin had been found. Then she had great joy.—Thus, too, must the penitent first have a light. The Holy Ghost must let His light of grace shine into your soul; then your sins will come to your memory.—**Before beginning the examination of conscience we should pray to God to give us light to know our sins and the grace to detest them.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

Some children seem to think that they do not need to pray. Just listen! Your face is covered with dirt spots. You look at yourself in the mirror. If it is bright day, you will see even the tiniest spot; but if it is pitch dark, you will see nothing; yes, perhaps you will even imagine, that you are beautiful and clean. Sins are stains on the soul. If the light of grace of the Holy Ghost shines into the soul, you will easily find your sins; without His heavenly light it is dark night in your soul, and you will not know your sins properly.—(Or hold a glass of water in the sunlight, and you will see every speck of dirt floating in it. Let your heart be enlightened with the light of the grace of the Holy Ghost, and you will easily discover every little spot of sin.)

Do you now see how necessary the Holy Ghost is for you? The Holy Ghost must enlighten the heart, so that our sins may come into our mind. We must, therefore, first pray.—But the chief thing is that we are displeased with our sins, and that we do not fall back into them again. For that reason, we need the Holy Ghost also, otherwise the heart will remain cold and stiff like a piece of ice. The Holy Ghost must

make the heart warm and soft, so that we may repent of our sins and confess them sincerely and resolve earnestly to amend our life. How, then, do we pray to the Holy Ghost?—

2. First to pray and then to think. That is how the boy of our story acted. How did he examine his conscience?—He went through the Ten Commandments one after the other; then also the precepts of the Church, the seven capital sins, and finally he also looked over the duties of his state in life, that is, at home and in school. At each Commandment and duty he thought a little while and asked himself: Did I do anything bad in thought, word, deed, or omission? Thus one can easily examine one's conscience. Let us also learn it in that way. Our Catechism says: **We can make a good examination of conscience by calling to memory the Commandments of God, the precepts of the Church, the seven capital sins, and the particular duties of our state in life, to find out the sins we have committed.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. But you would very much like to know: How long a time ought I to take examining my conscience? That depends; it is not the same for everyone. The boy of our story took nearly an hour for his First Holy Confession. That surely is enough. But if one confesses frequently, every week or two, fifteen minutes are long enough. But the boy of our story thought over his sins *earnestly.* The dear Lord demands that. For **the examination of conscience is an earnest effort to recall to mind all the sins we have committed since our last worthy confession.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* For that purpose the boy went specially into the church; there he was all alone with Jesus. That is right and that pleases God. But the penitent can also examine his conscience at home. Of course, in that case he ought to seek a quiet place, where he is all alone and can think without being disturbed.

4. But not all penitents take things as seriously and conscientiously as this boy; there are also careless children. They act like poor fisherman, who draw the net quickly over the surface of the water. What will they catch? Little or nothing at all. Thus, too, do many children act in examining their conscience. They think only hastily and on the surface, as it were, about their sins and then they go to Confession. That is a great mistake; that can easily become a bad Confession. *We ought to guard against the fault of examining ourselves too hastily and superficially. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* No, the penitent ought to act as fishermen, who understand how to fish. Did you ever watch them? They do not draw the net over the surface of the water, superficially; no, they let the net deep down into the water, and then they make a rich haul. So, too, must the penitent look deeply down into his heart and examine it earnestly and thoroughly; then he will make a good Confession.

Some people do *too little* before Confession—they are careless; others do *too much*—they are scrupulous. Yes, there are penitents, who never get finished with their examination of conscience. But from all such inquiry nothing results except anxiety, scrupulosity. That also is a mistake: *We must avoid becoming too scrupulous in our examination of conscience. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* To be conscientious, that is right; to be scrupulous, that God does not want. Only do your part and God will do His: examine yourself earnestly and God will pardon you.

Write on the blackboard:

1. Pray—"Come, Holy Ghost!"

2. Think carefully—Commandments of God, precepts of Church, seven capital sins, duties of state in life.

3. Examination of conscience—earnest effort to recall our sins since last worthy Confession.

4. Examination of conscience—(a) not superficial or hasty; (b) not scrupulous.

Synthesis. For a good Confession six things are necessary. We have learned about two of them today: to pray and to examine one's conscience. How ought one to begin one's examination of conscience?—How can one make a good examination of conscience?—What do you mean by an examination of conscience?—Against what faults ought we to be on our guard when examining our conscience?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. Here is a person that wants to confess. The last child has just entered into the confessional. This person thinks for a few moments, recalls a few gross sins and begins at once to confess. Afterwards he tells his friends: "Today I had good luck; my turn came at once to go to Confession." What do you think of that?—When did you call on the Holy Ghost? When did you examine your conscience? And where is your contrition? You imagine indeed, that God will be satisfied with that? No, for the good God only the very best is good enough. It is better not to confess at all than to confess badly.—But I have also seen children, who read their sins from a prayer-book or a table of sins. They thought to themselves: O! that is the right thing to do. What do you think of that?—You must think over *your* sins and confess *your* sins.

2. Without the Holy Ghost there is no good Confession. He must help us with His heavenly light and His heavenly strength, then all will be right. Therefore honor and venerate the Holy Ghost fervently. Henceforth pray very frequently: "Come, Holy Ghost, and enlighten me!"

LESSON XX.

Detailed Examination of Conscience.

Catechetical Unit:

1) In what manner should we examine our conscience? (Deharbe.)

2) Must we also examine ourselves on the number and the circumstances of our sins? (Deharbe.)

(N. B. The following instructions, which are intended to serve as a guide to the examination of conscience, require a short explanation. "Much too detailed! I have no time for all that!"—thus a voice here and there will protest. It is indeed true, that to devote at least three whole lessons to the examination of conscience is much, but not *too* much. Such a serious matter is also worthy of serious effort. Why are Confessions of adults often so defective and superficial? Defective instruction of children, especially in their earlier years, is the chief cause of this common fault. The harm done by negligence in this regard is not often remedied, as experience shows. Therefore let this early instruction for Confession be as thorough as possible! A careful sowing of the seeds, will generally also bring a good harvest.

The chief danger with regard to children's Confessions is lifeless routine, mechanical procedure. This stumbling-block must be avoided. Children ought to learn and therefore to be stimulated to think about themselves, and then to accuse themselves of their faults, as far as possible, in their own words. Every Confession ought to bear the individual impress of the child, so that the confessor may be able to obtain a deeper insight into the failings and the troubles of the child heart. This ideal has been kept in mind and aimed at in the preparation of these instructions.

A much mooted question of late is whether the children should make their examination of conscience with the aid of some table of sins. Whatever might be said on this subject from the theoretical viewpoint, as a matter of fact, circumstances are mostly such that the children must be given a table of sins. But it must answer its purpose, and be in reality a help. And even when it does answer all requirements, it must be carefully explained to the children. It should never be made to take the place entirely of oral instruction. With these principles in mind we advise the use of the leaflet *"A Method of Confession,"* which we have prepared on the basis of the instructions developed below.

Let it be borne in mind, however, that the subjoined examination of conscience is meant only for children in the intermediate grades. Later on—in the higher grades—the examination of conscience must be correspondingly amplified, but the

required additions should make an organic whole with the rest. For children should confess as children, youths as youths, and men as men. Evidently this table of sins could not be arranged to suit all possible local or individual needs. That must be left to the good judgment of the prudent catechist.

At the end of each instruction a brief *motive for contrition* should be placed by the catechist. The reason for this addition is threefold: first, the children are, of course, best disposed to contrition, when they have the individual sins clearly before their eyes; secondly, thus they learn best of all how to make a good act of contrition; and thirdly, thereby they are convinced that contrition is the chief thing in Confession.)

Preparation. Dear children, a careless Catholic went one morning to church to confess his sins. But when he had entered the Lord's house, he went at once directly into the confessional, without having made any preparation. Kneeling down before the confessor he began: "Father, please hear my Confession." "Certainly," answered the priest, "but remember that God will also hear you!" The man became very frightened at these words, and said: "If God will also hear my Confession, surely I must examine my conscience more and think of what I intend to say!" Yes, children, it is God, Who hears our Confession. Therefore we ought to prepare well for it, especially by making a good examination of conscience. We heard of that in the last class. Let us review it briefly. *(Question the pupils on the foregoing lesson.)*—But it is very important to know how to make a good examination of conscience.

Aim. That is what I intend to show you today: *how you ought to examine your conscience before each Confession.*

Presentation, Explanation, Application.

I.

Let us suppose that you are about to go to Confession. First you go to some *quiet place,* preferably the church, where you will be alone and undisturbed. Yes, rather postpone your Confession for another day, than examine your conscience only superficially and carelessly. Do not forget that.

Then kneel down and *pray,* briefly but devoutly, *to the Holy Ghost.* You might recite this prayer: "Come, O Holy Ghost, enlighten my mind, that I may rightly know my sins; and move my heart, that I may properly repent of them, sincerely confess them, and amend my life. Amen." Or recite five Our Fathers and Hail Marys. Never omit to pray before making your examination.

Now if you really wish to examine your conscience for Confession, what must you do first of all? You must know when your last worthy Confession took place. Therefore, *think of your last Confession.* Ask yourself: When was my last Confession? Suppose it took place two weeks ago, how would you say it?

The next important question to ask yourself is this: Did I make a good Confession? That means: Did I examine my conscience properly before my last Confession? Did I have true sorrow for my sins? Did I make a firm purpose of amendment, or did I firmly resolve to avoid all mortal sins, and the near occasions of sin? Did I confess all my sins, at least all my mortal sins, sincerely and honestly? Did I forget any mortal sin? Did I wilfully conceal any mortal sin? Did I say the penance, which the confessor gave me to say?

If your conscience tells you—Yes, you made a good Confession—you need only to think of the sins, which you have committed since your last Confession.

But let us suppose that your conscience tells you: You did *not* make a good Confession. You concealed a mortal sin, because you were ashamed to tell it; or did not really intend to avoid this or that mortal sin. What must you do in that case?

You must ask yourself further: Were perhaps some of my other Confessions also bad? When did I make my last good Confession? Suppose that you discover that the last three Confessions were bad and that you made the last worthy Confession three months

ago. What must you do now? You must recall to your mind (and confess): "I made three bad Confessions (and Communions)." Then you are bound in conscience to examine yourself in regard to all the (mortal) sins, which you have committed for the last three months and also those sins which you have confessed in those three bad Confessions. Be sure to tell the confessor that at the very beginning of your Confession. He will then help you to say the rest properly. Remember, therefore: **We should examine when it was that we last made a good Confession, and whether we performed the penance then laid upon us.** *(Repeat together.)*

II.

Now *begins the examination of conscience properly so-called.* In thought go through the table of sins, Commandment by Commandment, sin by sin, slowly and carefully. Pause a little at each sin and think whether you have committed that sin or not. Ask yourself: How can one sin against this Commandment? Did I really think, say, do, or omit to do anything, which God (or the Church) commands me not to do or not to omit to do? You see, therefore: **We should go through the Commandments of God, the precepts of the Church, the seven capital sins, and the particular duties of our state in life, carefully examining whether we have offended God by thoughts, words, actions, or omissions.** *(Repeat together.)*

III.

If you find, that you have committed *mortal sins,* you must also ask yourself the question: How often did I commit that sin? How many times in a day, or in a week, or in a month, or how often have I done that altogether since my last worthy Confession? Moreover, was there anything I did then, which made that sin worse and more grievous? You know that a person who steals $100 commits a much worse sin than a person who steals only an apple. Likewise a

person, who commits impure things before other people, is guilty of a more grievous sin, than a person who does such things alone. Therefore, at times certain circumstances make our sin much worse and more grievous than at other times. Do not forget, therefore: **We must also examine ourselves on the number and the circumstances of our sins, at least when they are mortal.** *(Repeat together.)*

But with regard to venial sins it is not necessary to examine yourself about the number and the circumstances. However, it is better to tell the number at least; for often you do not know clearly whether a certain sin is mortal or only venial, and you might easily omit to tell the number of your mortal sins, if you do not accustom yourself to telling the number.

Once you discover your sins, *be sure to impress them at once on your memory.* The other sins, which you find in the table of sins and which you have not committed, you need not confess. Therefore, you may pass over them at once and go immediately to the next sin.

(N. B. The catechist will follow the questions and answers of the Baltimore Catechism, with the supplementary answers from the Catechism of Deharbe, according to the explanations given in the volume on *"The Commandments Explained."* We reproduce the pertinent questions and answers *in extenso* for the greater convenience of the teacher. The catechist ought to mention all the sins tabulated against the various Commandments, even though the pupils of the intermediate grades do not commit them, for the catechist must prepare his pupils for the future. However, special insistence must be laid upon the sins, which concern the pupils here and now. We have included only the latter sins in the table of sins to be given the children. For practical reasons the catechist will have individual pupils make a public Confession of the sins in question in order to get them used to telling the sins in their own words. After each Commandment has been gone through, the pupils will make an examination of their own conscience. Then they will write their sins on a piece of paper. Have them cross out (and destroy) the list at the end of the lesson. Be careful also that they do not look at one another's list. Tell the children, that you do not want to see the list, because you are not their confessor now.)

You must go through the Ten Commandments of God, the six precepts of the Church, the seven capital sins, and the particular duties of your state in life. But how will you go about this? You already know from your Catechism what God (or the Church) commands in each Commandment and what He forbids, or how one can sin against each Commandment. Therefore, call to memory and ask yourself: Did I do that? How often did I commit that sin? Let me show you that more clearly.

Against the First Commandment of God.

1. What is the first Commandment of God? The first Commandment of God is: "I am the Lord, Thy God; thou shalt not have strange gods before Me."

What are we commanded by the first Commandment? By the first Commandment we are commanded to pay to Almighty God due honor and adoration. In one word: we are obliged to practice our *holy religion.* God wants us to honor and adore Him with body and soul, exteriorly and interiorly.

But how do we adore God? We adore God by faith, hope and charity, by prayer and sacrifice.

How do we adore God *interiorly?* We adore God interiorly by acts of faith, hope, charity and prayer. Interior religion.

How do we adore God *exteriorly?* We adore God exteriorly by devoutly assisting at divine services, by folding the hands, by genuflecting, by taking holy water, by praying aloud, by singing, by our devout behaviour during religious exercises, and especially by sacrifice. Exterior religion.

2. Now let us recall the principal sins against the first Commandment.

a) Let us begin with sins against the duty of *Prayer.* You know that we sin against the duty of prayer, either when we do not pray at all, or when we pray badly. Therefore, ask yourself:

Was I careless about saying my morning prayers? my evening prayers? grace before and after meals?

Did I think of other things during my prayers? Or as we can also say: *Did I pray with attention and devotion?*

Did I disturb others during prayer?

Did I become angry, when I was told to pray?

b) Are sins against faith, hope and charity also sins against the first Commandment? Sins against faith, hope and charity are also sins against the first Commandment.

How does a person sin against *Faith?* A person sins against Faith, (1) by not trying to know what God has taught; (2) by refusing to believe all that God has taught, and (3) by neglecting to profess his belief in what God has taught. Ask yourself:

Did I neglect to study my Catechism?

Did I listen to wicked companions speak against, or make fun of, our holy religion?

Did I myself take part in such talk?

Did I read, or spread, bad books, or newspapers against our holy religion?

Did I entertain wilful doubts against our holy religion?

Was I ashamed to profess my holy religion, for example, by eating meat on a Friday, because others might laugh at me, if I did not eat meat?

Which are the sins against *Hope?* The sins against Hope are presumption and despair.

What is presumption? Presumption is a rash expectation of salvation without making the proper use of the necessary measures to obtain it.

What is despair? Despair is the loss of hope in God's mercy. Ask yourself:

Did I keep on committing sin, thinking that I could confess it again?

Did I think my sins were too great to be forgiven by God?

How do we sin against the *Love of God?* We sin against the Love of God by all sins, but particularly by all mortal sin. You remember, also, that we learned that we sin against the Love of God, or against the charity we owe to God, by being careless and lukewarm, indifferent, in the practice of our holy religion; also by murmuring and complaining against God when things do not go according to our wishes. But the worst sin of all is hatred of God. Ask yourself:

Was I careless and indifferent in the practice of our holy religion?

Did I murmur against God, when things did not go according to my wishes?

Did I even hate God, when He did not give me what I wanted, or when He sent trials upon me?

c) How else may the first Commandment be broken? The first Commandment may also be broken by giving to a creature the honor, which belongs to God; by false worship, and by attributing to a creature a perfection, which belongs to God alone. You remember, therefore, that there are three kinds of sins forbidden by this answer: *idolatry, false worship* and *superstition.*

You do not, of course, commit the terrible sin of idolatry. But perhaps you are guilty of false worship. Ask yourself:

Did I go to a Protestant church and take part in the praying and singing?

Do those who make use of spells and charms, or who believe in dreams, in mediums, spirits, fortune-tellers, and the like sin against the first Commandment? Those who make use of spells and charms, or who be-

lieve in dreams, in mediums, spirits, fortune-tellers and the like, sin against the first Commandment, because they attribute to creatures perfections, which belong to God alone. Ask yourself:

Did I believe in dreams?

In what other way was I superstitious?

Now, dear children, *make an examination of your own conscience.* Write down on your note paper the sins which you have committed against this Commandment, just as you would tell them to the Confessor. Now cross them out. Thus are your sins blotted out in Holy Confession. The Holy Ghost washes them from your soul by the Blood of Jesus Christ.

Against the Second Commandment of God.

1. What is the second Commandment of God? The second Commandment of God is: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."

What are we commanded by the second Commandment? By the second Commandment we are commanded to speak with reverence of God and of the Saints, and of all holy things, and to keep our lawful oaths and vows. In a word, therefore: we are bound to show reverence for *the holy name of God,* of God's friends, the Saints, and of the other holy things of our religion.

2. Let us now briefly recall the principal sins against this Commandment.

What is forbidden by the second Commandment? The second Commandment forbids all false, rash, unjust and unnecessary oaths, blasphemy, cursing and profane words.

a) What do you mean by blasphemy? By *blasphemy* is meant contemptuous and abusive language uttered against God, the Saints, or holy things. We may also become guilty of blasphemy by thoughts, when we wilfully think in a contemptuous manner of God or the Saints.

You do not, of course, commit this sin. But if later on you should become guilty of it, how must you examine your conscience? Ask yourself:

Did I speak with contempt of God, or of our holy religion?

Did I scoff at religion, at the rites and ceremonies of the Church, or turn them into ridicule?

Did I wilfully think in a contemptuous manner of God or of the Saints?

b) What is meant by taking an oath, or swearing? By taking an oath, or *swearing,* is meant the calling upon God to witness the truth of what we say. You remember, that we may take an oath, when it is ordered by lawful authority, or when it is required for the honor of God, or for our own or our neighbor's good. But it is necessary that what we swear be true, and that there be a sufficient cause for taking an oath.

We sin by swearing (1) when we swear falsely or in doubt, (2) when we swear, or tell others to swear, without necessity, (3) when we swear to do evil, or to omit what is good, and (4) if we do not keep our oath, when we can keep it.

Children do not, of course, swear. But perhaps later on you may swear and sin by swearing. How would you have to examine your conscience in this matter? Ask yourself:

Did I assert with an oath that something is true, when I knew it was not true, or, when I was in doubt whether it was true or untrue? Did I swear falsely? or in doubt?

Did I promise with an oath something which I did not intend to perform?

Did I swear to do something evil?

Did I keep my oath?

Did I swear without necessity?

c) What is a vow? A *vow* is a deliberate promise made to God to do something that is pleasing to Him.

You remember, that a vow is much more than a mere good resolution. If a person makes a vow, he is obliged in conscience to keep that vow, if he is able. Otherwise he commits sin, mortal or venial, according to the nature of the vow and the intention he had in making the vow.

Children do not ordinarily make a vow, because they do not understand it sufficiently. But perhaps when you get bigger, you will some day or other make a vow. What must you then ask yourself in the examination of conscience?

Did I really make a vow?

Did I keep it?

d) What do you mean by cursing? By *cursing* is meant to wish evil to ourselves or to our neighbor, or to any of God's creatures whereby the name of God is frequently dishonored. People who are guilty of cursing, wish harm to themselves or to others, damn themselves or others, and often speak the name of God at the same time without reverence. Ask yourself:

Did I curse by wishing harm to myself? to others?

e) How do we sin by irreverently pronouncing God's holy name? We sin by *irreverently pronouncing, or profaning, the name of God,* if we pronounce it in jest, or in anger, or in any other careless manner. Many children commit this sin. How must they ask themselves when they examine their conscience?

Did I speak the name of God carelessly?

Did I use the name of Jesus without reverence?

Now *examine your own conscience.* Write your own sins in your note book just as you would confess them. If you have no sins, write down the chief sins against this Commandment. (This is done to safeguard the seal of the Confession in every possible way.) Now cross them out. Thus are your sins blotted out in holy Confession.

Against the Third Commandment of God and the First Precept of the Church

Which is the third Commandment of God? The third Commandment of God is: "Remember, that thou keep holy the Sabbath day."

Which is the first Commandment of the Church? The first Commandment of the Church is: To hear Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation.

These two Commandments go together in the examination of conscience.

1. What are we commanded by the third Commandment of God? By the third Commandment of God we are commanded to keep holy the Lord's day and the holy days of obligation, on which we are to give our time to the service and worship of God.

How are we to worship God on Sundays and holy days of obligation? We are to worship God on Sundays and holy days of obligation by hearing Mass, by prayer, and by other good works.

Is it a mortal sin not to hear Mass on a Sunday or a holy day of obligation? It is a mortal sin not to hear Mass on a Sunday or a holy day of obligation, unless we are excused for a serious reason. They also commit a mortal sin, who, having others under their charge hinder them from hearing Mass, without a sufficient reason.

In one word: We are bound *to sanctify the Lord's day, Sunday, and in this country the six holy days of obligation* by going to Mass and by prayer and good works.

2. Let us now think of the sins against these two Commandments.

What is forbidden by the third Commandment of God? The third Commandment of God forbids all unnecessary works and whatever else may hinder the due observance of the Lord's day. You remember, of course, that servile works are works which require

labor of the body rather than of the mind. We may perform servile works on a Sunday or holy day of obligation, when the honor of God or the good of our neighbor, or necessity requires them.

What do you ask yourself in regard to these two Commandments?

Did I miss Mass on Sunday through my own fault?

Did I miss Mass on a holy day of obligation through my own fault?

Did I come too late to Mass through my own fault?

Did I misbehave in church?

Did I disturb others in church?

Did I keep others away from Mass?

Did I perform servile works on a Sunday, or holy day of obligation, without a good reason?

Examine your own conscience. Write your own sins on paper just as you would have to confess them. Now cross them out. Thus does the Holy Ghost blot out your sins in Holy Confession.

Against the Fourth Commandment of God.

What is the fourth Commandment of God? The fourth Commandment of God is: "Honor thy father and thy mother."

What are we commanded by the fourth Commandment? We are commanded by the fourth Commandment to *honor, love, and obey our parents* in all that is not sin.

Are we bound to honor and obey others than our parents? We are also bound to honor and obey our bishops, pastors, magistrates, teachers, and *other lawful superiors.* God gave us rulers, superiors, for our spiritual and temporal welfare. He commands us to honor and obey both the spiritual and the temporal authorities.

Have parents and superiors any duties towards those who are under their charge? It is the duty of

parents and superiors to take good care of all under their charge and give them proper direction and example.

2. Let us now consider the chief sins against this Commandment.

What is forbidden by the fourth Commandment? The fourth Commandment forbids all disobedience, contempt and stubbornness towards our parents and other lawful superiors. Ask yourself:

Was I disobedient to my parents? to my teacher? to the priest? to other superiors?

Did I willingly listen to the good advice, which they gave me? Or did I resist them, when they corrected me?

Was I stubborn and saucy at home? in school?

Did I in my heart despise or disregard my parents? my teachers? other superiors?

Did I speak ill of my parents? of my teachers? of the priest?

Was I ashamed of my parents?

Was I disrespectful or saucy to my parents? to my teachers? to the priest? to other superiors?

Did I treat them harshly and insolently?

Did I even raise my hand against my parents? against my teachers?

Did I curse my parents, my teachers, the priest, by wishing them harm?

Did I grieve my parents, or bring disgrace upon them, or make them angry with me by my bad behaviour?

Did I put up with the faults of my parents?

Did I assist my parents in their need? in their old age?

Did I pray for my parents, whether living or dead?

(There are other sins against the fourth Commandment, which you as children do not commit now. But

later on you will, perhaps, become *fathers* and *mothers of families,* and you will be obliged to examine your conscience in regard to your duties in this matter. Therefore, you ought also to know the chief sins, which can be committed against this Commandment. Then, too, you will later on become *employees* for others. You should know what sins you might commit then. You will have to ask yourself:

Did I teach my children the Catholic Religion, or see to it that they were properly instructed?

Did I train my children to a pious life?

Did I give my children a good example?

Did I correct my children's faults?

Did I waste the time, or the goods, of my employer?

Did I keep those under my care from practising their religion?

Did I treat those under my care harshly?

Did I give to my employees a sufficient wage?

Did I pay my taxes?

Now *examine your own conscience.* Write your own sins in your note book just as you would confess them. Now cross them out. Thus does the Holy Ghost blot out your sins in Confession.

Against the Fifth Commandment of God.

1. What is the fifth Commandment of God? The fifth Commandment of God is: "Thou shalt not kill."

What are we commanded by the fifth Commandment? We are commanded by the fifth Commandment to live in peace and union with our neighbor, to respect his rights, to seek his spiritual and bodily welfare, and to take proper care of our own life and health. In a word: we are obliged in conscience *to respect the life and limb of our neighbor and of ourselves;* we are also bound to *seek the spiritual welfare of our neighbor.*

2. Let us now consider the sins against this Commandment.

What is forbidden by the fifth Commandment? The fifth Commandment forbids all wilful murder, fighting, anger, hatred, revenge and bad example. Ask yourself:

Did I quarrel with my companions? with others?

Did I hate my neighbor? Did I desire to take revenge upon him?

Did I call others bad, abusive names?

Did I fight with others, and strike, or wound them in an unjust manner?

Did I, by harsh treatment, embitter or shorten the life of my parents, or companions?

Did I ruin my own health by careless conduct?

Did I expose myself to injury by my careless conduct?

Did I teach other children to steal, to cheat, to look at bad things, to do bad things?

Was I cruel to animals?

Now *examine your own conscience.* Write down your own sins just as you would accuse yourself in Confession. Now blot them out. Thus are your sins taken away by the absolution of the priest.

Against the Sixth and Ninth Commandments of God.

1. What is the sixth Commandment of God? The sixth Commandment of God is: "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

What is the ninth Commandment of God: The ninth Commandment of God is: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife."

These two Commandments belong together. They refer to the duty of *living a chaste life.*

What are we commanded by the sixth Commandment? We are commanded by the sixth Commandment to be pure in thought, and modest in all our looks, words, and actions.

What are we commanded by the ninth Commandment? We are commanded by the ninth Commandment to keep ourselves pure in thought and desire.

2. Let us think, now, of the sins, which these two Commandments forbid.

What is forbidden by the sixth Commandment? The sixth Commandment forbids all unchaste freedom with another's wife or husband; also all immodesty with ourselves or others in looks, dress, or actions.

Does the sixth Commandment forbid the reading of bad and immodest books and newspapers? The sixth Commandment does forbid the reading of bad and immodest books and newspapers.

What is forbidden by the ninth Commandment? The ninth Commandment forbids unchaste thoughts, desires of another's wife or husband, and all other unlawful impure thoughts and desires. Ask yourself:

Did I take pleasure in immodest thoughts?

Did I desire to do immodest things?

Did I look with pleasure at immodest pictures, or other things?

Did I say immodest things?

Did I listen to immodest jokes?

Did I read immodest words?

Did I write immodest words?

Did I do immodest things with myself?

Did I do immodest things with others?

Now *examine your own conscience.* Write your sins on paper just as you would confess them. Now cross them out. Thus does the Holy Spirit blot out your sins, if you are sincerely sorry for them and resolve to avoid them for the future.

Against the Seventh and Tenth Commandments of God.

1. What is the seventh Commandment of God? The seventh Commandment of God is: "Thou shalt not steal."

What is the tenth Commandment of God? The tenth Commandment of God is: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods."

These two Commandments belong together. They refer to our duty *in regard to the property of our neighbor.*

What are we commanded by the seventh Commandment? By the seventh Commandment we are commanded to give to all men what belongs to them and to respect their property.

What are we commanded by the tenth Commandment? By the tenth Commandment we are Commanded to be content with what we have, and to rejoice in our neighbor's welfare.

2. Let us now recall the chief sins against these two Commandments.

What is forbidden by the seventh Commandment? The seventh Commandment forbids all unjust taking or keeping what belongs to another.

What is forbidden by the tenth Commandment? The tenth Commandment forbids all desires to take or keep wrongfully what belongs to another.

Are we bound to restore ill-gotten goods? We are bound to restore ill-gotten goods, or the value of them, as far as we are able, otherwise we cannot be forgiven.

Are we obliged to repair the damage we have unjustly caused? We are bound to repair the damage we have unjustly caused. Now ask yourself:

Did I secretly take things at home?

Did I steal? What did I steal?

Did I return what I stole?

Did I keep money back without permission?

Did I return things, which I had borrowed? or found?

Did I spoil or break things belonging to others?

Did I tell others to steal? Did I help others to steal?

(Later on you must also ask yourself:

Did I pay my debts?

Did I cheat others by false weights or measures, by bad money, or bad articles?)

Examine your own conscience. Write your own sins down just as your conscience tells them to you. Now cross them out again. Thus does God forgive your sins through a worthy Confession.

Against the Eighth Commandment of God.

1. What is the eighth Commandment of God? The eighth Commandment of God is: "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor."

What are we commanded by the eighth Commandment? We are commanded by the eighth Commandment *to speak the truth* in all things and *to be careful of the honor and reputation of every one.*

2. Let us now recall the sins against this Commandment.

What is forbidden by the eighth Commandment? The eighth Commandment forbids all rash judgments, backbiting, slanders and lies.

What must they do who have lied about their neighbor and seriously injured his character? They who have lied about their neighbor and seriously injured his character must repair the injury done as far as they are able, otherwise they will not be forgiven. Now ask yourself:

Did I tell lies in fun?

Did I tell lies to escape punishment?

Did I tell lies so that another was punished unjustly?

Did I tell the faults of my companions without a good reason?

Did I tell lies about my companions, or others?

Did I pretend to be better or more pious than I really am, in order to deceive others?

Did I listen with delight to others speaking against another?

Did I encourage others by asking questions, when they told me faults, or lies, about another?

Was I suspicious of others without a good reason?

Did I believe the evil of my neighbor to be true, without a sufficient reason?

Examine your own conscience. Write your own sins just as you would tell them to your confessor. Now cross them out. Thus are your sins forgiven in Holy Penance.

Against the Second Precept of the Church.

1. Which are the chief Commandments of the Church? The chief Commandments of the Church are six: (1) To hear Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation; (2) To fast and abstain on the days appointed; (3) To confess at least once a year; (4) To receive the Holy Eucharist during the Easter time; (5) To contribute to the support of our pastors; (6) Not to marry persons who are not Catholic, or who are related to us within the third degree of kindred, nor privately without witnesses, nor to solemnize marriage at forbidden times.

Of these six Commandments of the Church, for the present, you need for Confession only the first and the second. We have already examined ourselves on the first precept. Let us, therefore, recall only the second.

What do you mean by the days of abstinance? By the days of abstinence I mean days on which we are forbidden to eat flesh-meat but are allowed the usual number of meals.

2. On which days are we not allowed to eat meat? On all Fridays of the year, unless a holy day of obligation falls on Friday; on the vigils of Christmas, Pentecost, the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into

Heaven, and All-Saints; on the Emberdays (four times a year); on Ash Wednesday, on the Fridays and Saturdays of Lent. Ask yourself:

Did I eat meat on a Friday, or a day of abstinence, through my own fault?

(Later on you will also have to ask yourself:

Did I break the law of fast?)

Examine your own conscience. Write your own sins on paper. Now cross them out again. Thus does God blot out your guilt through a worthy Confession.

The Capital Sins.

1. Which are the chief sources of sin? The chief sources of sin are seven: Pride, Covetousness, Lust, Anger, Gluttony, Envy and Sloth; and they are commonly called capital sins.

We have already considered the third capital sin, Lust, in the sixth and ninth Commandments of God.

2. Let us consider the six other sins.

When do we sin by Pride? We sin by Pride when we think too much of ourselves and despise others.

When do we sin by Covetousness? We sin by Covetousness when we inordinately seek and love money or other worldly goods; when we are hard-hearted to those who are in distress.

When do we sin by Anger? We sin by Anger when we are exasperated at that which displeases us, fly into a passion, and suffer ourselves to be carried away with a violent desire of revenge.

When do we sin by Gluttony? We sin by Gluttony when we eat or drink too much, when we gulp down food in a greedy manner, in an inordinate manner, and when we long for eating and drinking out of times.

When do we sin by Envy? We sin by Envy when we repine at our neighbor's good and are sad when he

is in possession of temporal or spiritual blessings, or when we rejoice when our neighbor is deprived of them.

When do we sin by Sloth? We sin by Sloth when we give way to our natural repugnance to labor and exertion, and thus neglect our duties. Ask yourself:

Was I proud? Did I think too much of myself, and despise others?

Was I stingy? Was I hard-hearted to those who are in need?

Was I angry with others?

Did I eat and drink too much?

Was I jealous of others? Was I glad when others were punished?

Was I lazy?

Examine your own conscience. Write your sins on paper. Now cross them out. Thus will God forgive your faults in Confession.

Special Examination of Conscience.

Ask yourself these questions also:

Which sin do I commit the most?

How have I kept my good resolution, which I made in the last Confession?

Have I become better or worse?

Against which sin must I take special care?

Examine your own conscience. Write your sins on paper. Now tear the paper up. Thus does God do away with your sins through the absolution of the confessor.

Now let us make a good *Act of Contrition* for our sins.

Look up to the Cross. Just gaze upon Jesus. His hands and feet are nailed fast. His body is beaten and all covered with wounds. His head bears the crown of thorns. His face is covered with blood and

filth. Thus does Jesus suffer for love of you. Now say with all your heart: "Oh my Jesus! I have repaid all Thy love only by ingratitude. I acknowledge my fault and repent of my guilt. Crucified Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me. Amen."

LESSON XXI.

Daily Examination of Conscience.

(Supplementary)

Catechetical Unit:

1) About what fault ought we to examine ourselves especially? (Deharbe)

2) How can we facilitate this examination of conscience? (Deharbe)

Presentation. Dear children, the penitent must first examine his conscience. We learned how to do that in the last class. Let us first review this lesson. *(Question the pupils briefly on the foregoing lesson.)* But a pious child, ought also to examine his conscience each day. That is what St. Aloysius did; and so gradually he overcame all the wicked inclinations of his heart. The little Saint is a beautiful example for all children. You ought to imitate him.

Aim. That is what I would like to show you now: *how you can become master over the evil inclinations of your heart.* Let us first look upon St. Aloysius.

Presentation. When little Aloysius was permitted to make his First Holy Confession, he prepared himself for it with all the fervor at his command. But it also caused him much worry as to whether the good God would be satisfied with him. With anxious heart he knelt down before the confessor, for he imagined that he was the greatest sinner in the whole world. But when all was over he felt very happy. Therefore he watched very carefully over his heart; for he

wanted to avoid in all earnestness even the small failings. Therefore he continually paid attention to himself, in order to discover and to remedy his chief fault especially.

Soon Aloysius discovered that he was continually becoming impatient and angry for the slightest reason, when things did not go according to his wishes. Outwardly he did not indeed show it, but inwardly he became disturbed very easily. Now this fault he wanted to overcome at any cost. How did he do it? He thought and said to himself: Surely it is cowardly and weak continually to be giving in to anger at once. For an angry man is never master over himself and oftentimes does not know any more what he is speaking and doing. Therefore Aloysius resolved with all earnestness: That must be changed; I do not want to be a slave of anger. And with God's help he also succeeded. Gradually he became quiet and meek like a patient lamb.

Aloysius discovered a second fault. When speaking he at times made use of an unkind and bad word about others. But he knew very well that God cannot bear unkind speech. This enemy also Aloysius wanted to conquer at any cost. Therefore he resolved: I will no longer go among the people as much as I have in the past, but I will rather remain at home in my little room. Then I will not so easily get into the danger of hearing or speaking bad words. Of course some people thought, that he ought not to have been so scrupulous and timid of the company of men. However, Aloysius would not allow himself to be led astray and let the people talk.

But Aloysius had a second means of freeing himself from his faults. Every evening, before he lay down to rest, he reflected: How did I spend the whole day? Did I do all things right? Or did I do anything badly? If he found a sin, he repented of it at once with all his heart: Dear God, pardon me. Tomor-

row I will do better. If he did not discover any fault, he prayed: Dear God, I thank Thee. Help me always to remain like this.

At the age of twelve years Aloysius was allowed to receive his First Holy Communion: he was already a little Saint. Henceforth he went to Holy Confession every Saturday and to Holy Communion every Sunday. On those occasions he was so full of devotion and reverence that he was like an angel from Heaven.

Explanation. 1. Aloysius is in Heaven a long time already. Now he is permitted to see God face to face. That is a greater happiness than if he had received the crown of a king. You also want some day to be as happy as he, do you not? But remember well, Heaven is not to be obtained for nothing; we must fight for Heaven. We can learn that from Aloysius. With deep contrition the little Saint went to First Holy Confession. That was right. But that was not yet enough for him. At what did he henceforth aim in a very special way?—Aloysius turned his eyes particularly to his chief fault. For he knew very well: The chief (predominant) fault is my chief enemy, yes my deadly enemy; it would like to deprive me of Heaven. Here it is a question of: Either—or! Either conquor or die! Either I will conquer the enemy or he will conquer me, and that might cost me my life. Do you see? Aloysius was a wise and a brave soldier. But all children are not like him. Very many overlook or hide from themselves in their examination of conscience that fault, which they like most of all to commit. Yes, **we ought to be specially on our guard against our chief sin, or our favorite fault.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

Now tell me, what pet faults did Aloysius have?—He found two chief faults in his heart: an angry and an unkind disposition. Now Aloysius began the battle

and he fought courageously as formerly the shepherd boy David. You know the story, of course.—With God's help the young hero killed the giant Goliath. But when the enemy saw, that their strong man was dead, they were struck with terror and fled. Thus also did Aloysius fight like a little hero. Soon he had overcome his chief fault; then the other faults disappeared of themselves.

2. But tell me, how did Aloysius accomplish that?—Every evening he examined his conscience. Before the evening prayer he again looked over the day and asked his heart: Did I sin today? Was I again unkind or angry? Did I say unkind words? Or did I listen to bad words? In the beginning, of course, scarcely a day passed without a little fault. For one cannot overcome the wicked inclinations all at once; that costs time and effort. But gradually his evil inclinations became weaker and weaker, until finally he had conquered them completely. Thus little Aloysius gradually became a little Saint, but a Saint by the grace of God. For every Saint must say with the Apostle Paul: "By the grace of God I am what I am" (I Cor. xv, 10).

To examine one's conscience each evening, also produces another benefit.—When Aloysius examined his conscience before Confession, he did not have to reflect long; all his sins came into his mind easily and quickly. Neither did he postpone his Confession for a long time. Every Saturday was for him the day for Confession and therefore a day of grace, and every Sunday the day for Communion and therefore a day of blessing. To examine one's conscience each day and to confess them—that makes Confession easy. Let us remember that: **We can make our examination of conscience easy by examining our conscience every day, and by going to Confession frequently.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

Examination of conscience:

1. in regard to our chief (pet) fault;
2. each day—confess frequently.

Thereby our examination is made easy and fruitful.

Synthesis. We can learn two things from Aloysius: Seek your chief fault and fight your chief fault; for the chief (predominant) fault is your chief enemy.—Against what fault ought we to be on our guard, when we examine our conscience?—How can everyone facilitate the examination of conscience?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism or the blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. As Aloysius did, so have all the Saints done. St. Ignatius even examined his conscience every hour. He wrote his faults down in a little book. For that reason he advanced on the road to Heaven with giant steps. Pious Christians also examine their conscience each day. Do you not also want to become pious Christian children? Well then reflect each evening a little on your sins! That is not difficult. Just remember how you ought to do it! Before you lie down to sleep, kneel down for a little while. Then pray for the heavenly light of grace: "Come, O Holy Ghost, and enlighten me!" Now look over the entire day and ask yourselves sincerely: Did I get up today at the right time? Did I say my morning prayer? Did I do my task for school? Was I attentive at school? Was I temperate in eating and drinking? Did I obey father and mother immediately? Was I friendly with my brothers and sisters and other children? Was I modest in thought and word and conduct? Did I tell lies? Did I take things secretly? Did I fall back into my chief fault? Thus make a brief review; that is over quickly.

But it is not enough simply to look for one's faults; the chief thing is *to be sorry.* That is what Aloysius

did. At the same time you might say: "O my Jesus, mercy;" or: "O God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" Then say your evening prayer and finally say with the dying Saviour: "Father! into Thy hands I command my spirit."

Then you can go to sleep quietly and, if God wills, even die undisturbed.

Now try it this very evening. You will see, that it is done very easily. The good God will bless you for it. Thus you will advance quickly on the path of virtue and of Heaven.

(N. B. The catechist ought not to neglect to remind the children again and again of the daily examination of conscience; then his words of admonition will not be without fruit.)

LESSON XXII.

True Contrition of Heart.

Catechetical Unit:

1) What is contrition or sorrow for sin? L. XVIII, Q. 195.

2) What do you mean by saying that our sorrow should be interior? L. XVIII, Q. 197.

3) What do you mean by saying that our sorrow should be supernatural? L. XVIII, Q. 198.

4) What do you mean by saying that our sorrow should be universal? L. XVIII, Q. 199.

5) What do you mean by saying that our sorrow should be sovereign? L. XVIII, Q. 200.

6) What kind of sorrow should we have for our sins? L. XVIII, Q. 196.

Preparation. Dear children, in the last class we learned a very wonderful means of advancing in the practice of Christian virtue. It is the practice of the daily examination of conscience. Let us review this teaching. *(Question the pupils briefly on the foregoing lesson.)*—The sinner must repent of, or feel

sorry for, his wickedness; that you all know. The prodigal son repented bitterly of his sinful life; then he went home to his father. But his father embraced him and kissed him and wept for joy, as though he wished to say: My son, all that is necessary is that you are here again! How did not this love of the father gladden the son and at the same time how did it not pain him Oh! so much. Now he felt sorry for his wicked life all the more; and his father forgave him all, because he saw the sorrow, or contrition, of his son.—The heavenly Father does just the same: He hastens out to meet the poor sinner and gives him grace for a good Confession. And then, when the sinner feels sorrow for all, God is merciful and is willing to forgive everything and to press the prodigal son again to His fatherly Heart. Jesus Himself once showed and told us that in a very beautiful manner. He forgave a poor sinner all, because she had charity and contrition in her heart. First I am going to tell you the story.

Aim. Thereby you can learn: *when the sinner has true contrition of heart.* Pay strict attention, so that you may understand all; for contrition is the kernel of the whole Sacrament of Penance. Contrition, then, is the principal thing in all the instructions on Confession.

Presentation. Jesus happened to be in the little town of Capharnaum on the lovely lake of Genesareth. A rich Pharisee, named Simon, asked Jesus to dine with him. Jesus went into the house of the Pharisee. Now while the guests were at table, the door opened and with silent tread a woman entered—Magdalen. She was known in the whole town as a sinner. But suddenly she was changed, as it were, into a different person. She laid aside all her vain dress and ornaments. In her hand she carries a vessel of precious ointment. Thus she approaches Jesus with her back turned; for she does not dare to let His eyes fall upon

her. Humbly she kneels down and moistens His feet with her tears and dries them with the hair of her head, and kisses Jesus' feet again and again, and anoints them with precious ointment.

When the Pharisee saw that, he was scandalized and said within himself: "If this man were a prophet, he would know what sort of a woman this is; for she is a sinner." But Jesus saw into his heart and said: "Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee. Seest thou this woman? I came into thy house and thou gavest Me no water for My feet; but she washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. Thou gavest Me no kiss; but she hath not ceased to kiss My feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but she hath anointed My feet with precious ointment. Therefore I say to thee: Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much." Then Jesus turned to the woman and said: "Thy sins are forgiven thee. Go in peace." (Luke vii, 36-50.) *(Show the pupils a large picture of this scene.)*

Explanation. 1. a) A touching picture! There the dear Saviour sits so gentle and kind, and at His feet kneels a poor sinner. What is Magdalen doing?—She is weeping hot tears and washing the feet of the Lord and kissing and anointing the feet of Jesus. What do those tears tell you?—Magdalen has bitter sorrow, true grief, in her soul for her sins. That sorrow, that grief, burned within her soul like a fire. That is contrition: *sorrow, grief, of the soul for past sins.*

b) When Magdalen looked into her heart, how do you think she felt?—It seemed to her that her heart was like a detestable swamp, in which ugly vermin were leading their horrid life. And what do you suppose the sinner thought of herself?—Away with those detestable sins! *I will have nothing more to do with them!* Oh, how could I ever have led such a disgraceful life of sin! Really I feel like weeping to death. I would give my life, if only I had never committed those

sins! Do you see? The penitent had a *hatred for her sins.* That is contrition.

Now let us put the whole answer together: **Contrition, or sorrow for sin, is a hatred of sin and a true grief of the soul for having offended God, with a firm purpose of sinning no more.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

2. Now let us look a little more deeply into Magdalen's heart. Humbly and sorrowfully she kneels at Jesus' feet. She knows very well: I am a poor, miserable sinner; I am not worthy at all to appear before Jesus. Therefore neither does she say a single word, but she only weeps. What do you think? Was she in earnest when she wept?—Yes, those tears came not merely from the eyes, but from deep down in her soul. Her entire conduct shows us that.

There are, indeed, many sinners, who do all outwardly in the right way. They recite the act of contrition with their lips, but their heart has no part in it; interiorly they are not at all in earnest. What do you think the dear Lord will say to that?—God does not look at the lips, but rather at the heart. To repent with the lips is only sham sorrow, but not real sorrow of the heart. If Magdalen, too, had been sorry only outwardly, but not inwardly, interiorly, Jesus would never have spoken to her those consoling words: "Thy sins are forgiven thee!" But Magdalen felt sorry for her sins, not with her lips only, but in her heart, interiorily, because sin is the greatest of evils. And what was her only desire? — Oh, that I had never sinned! There you see: true contrition of heart must be *interior.* Our Catechism says: **When I say that our contrition should be interior, I mean that it should come from the heart, and not merely from the lips.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. But suppose that Magdalen felt sorry for her sins simply and solely because she was ashamed of what the people were thinking and saying about her; or

because she was afraid, that the good people of Capharnaum were about to cast her out of the town. Do you think that Jesus would have been satisfied with that sorrow?—No, for in that case she would not be thinking of God at all. She would be sorry for her sins merely because of the shame and disgrace and harm that her sins had brought upon her. Such contrition for sin is not bad; but neither is it right and proper. It is only *natural sorrow,* or contrition. Such contrition does not come from God—is not excited by the grace of God. It is not sorrow for sin, because sin offends God, causes one to lose Heaven and deserve the pains of Hell. It is prompted by natural motives only.

Magdalen had much more than natural sorrow for her sins. God himself moved her to sorrow; the grace of God entered her soul and excited her to hate her sins and to grieve over them. She thought to herself: Oh, how I have offended God by my sins! Yes, I do deserve to lose Heaven and to enter Hell for my wicked life! Therefore she was sorry for her sins. You see: Magdalen's sorrow was excited by the grace of God and was prompted by motives of faith, and not merely natural motives. She had *supernatural* sorrow. **When I say that our sorrow should be supernatural, I mean that it should be prompted by the grace of God, and excited by motives which spring from faith, and not merely by natural motives.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

4.Magdalen had sinned much; and yet, Jesus said: "Thy sins are forgiven thee!" Why did Jesus forgive her sins?—Because Magdalen felt sorry for *all* that she had done. What she had hitherto loved, that now she detested and hated: all her sins, great and small, mortal and venial sins. If she had repented of only one mortal sin, not a single sin would have been forgiven her; for her sorrow would not have been the proper sorrow. It would not have been *universal.* Remember then: **when I say that our sorrow must be**

universal, I mean that we should be sorry for all our mortal sins without exception. *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Understand that well! The sinner ought to repent of *all* his sins, also the venial sins, but he *must* feel sorrow for all his mortal sins. Whoever feels sorry for all *but one* mortal sin, prefers that sin to the dear Lord and remains in mortal sin. A single mortal sin puts out the grace of God from the soul and makes out of a child of God a child of the devil. St. Augustine, therefore, once said: "What does it profit you to break your chains, if only one still binds you to Hell?" You can easily understand that.—See! one is fastened to Hell by mortal sins; every mortal sin is an iron chain. If you have ten mortal sins, you are bound to Hell by ten iron chains. If you break nine of these chains by contrition, are you then free?—No, you are still fastened by one chain to Hell. You are and you remain a grievous sinner with even only a single mortal sin.

5. Let us look at Magdalen again. Why is she weeping?—She is thinking to herself: Oh, what a wicked life I have been living! The good God is displeased with me; yes, He will have nothing more to do with me. I deserve to be cast into Hell for my sins. How ugly my sins are! Oh, that I had never committed them! Never will I sin again, no, not for anything in the world! I am willing to suffer anything rather than offend God again by sin. Do you see? Magdalen was sorry for her sins, because sin is the greatest evil in the world; it made her lose God and was about to cast her soul into Hell for all eternity. Therefore she hated her sins. Her contrition was *sovereign.* Our Catechism says: **When I say that our contrition should be sovereign, I mean that we should grieve more for having offended God than for any other evil that can befall us.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

6. Now we know what kind of sorrow we should have for our sins. Let us say this answer together: **The sorrow we should have for our sins should be interior, supernatural, universal, and sovereign.**

Write on the blackboard:

1. Contrition—grief of soul, hatred of sin, resolution to sin no more.

Our contrition should be: (6)

2. Interior—in the heart.
3. Supernatural—excited by God's grace, prompted by motives of faith.
4. Universal—extend to all sins (mortal sins).
5. Sovereign—because sin is the greatest evil.

Synthesis. The penitent Magdalen is a picture of true contrition. She even wept over her sins. The sinner must weep, at least in his heart. What is contrition or sorrow for sin? — True contrition of the heart must be supernatural. What do you mean by that?—True contrition of heart must be universal. For how many sins must we be sorry?—True contrition of heart must be sovereign. What do you understand by that?—Now tell me all the qualities of true contrition. *(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. *Contrition is a grief of the soul and a hatred for sin.* We see that in the case of Magdalen. Tell me some other examples of true contrition of the heart!—We have already narrated the story of the sin and the contrition of Peter. Three times did the Apostle deny his Lord and Master in a shameful manner; but then he went and wept bitterly. Yes, it is said, that he repented of his sin during his whole life. What was in his soul?—These tears of penance worked in his soul like a second Baptism.—How did the publican pray in the temple?—He struck his breast and said: "Oh God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" His

entire conduct shows his bitter grief of soul.—The good thief to the right of Christ even in the very last hour of his life entered into himself and said the prayer: "Lord, remember me, when Thou enterest into Thy Kingdom!"—King David had fallen deeply. But his sin grieved him deeply. He cast himself upon the ground and did not eat or drink anymore. Again and again he cried out, with sorrow and grief: "Have mercy on me, O Lord, according to Thy great mercy. A contrite and humble heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." (Ps. L.)

2. Now just look a little into your own hearts! Have you not already imitated Magdalen in her sins? If so, then imitate her also in her contrition! Pray often humbly and contritely: "My Jesus, have mercy!" Then Jesus will also say to you in Holy Confession: "Thy sins are forgiven thee. Go in peace!"

LESSON XXIII.

The Christian's Contrition.

Catechetical Unit:

1) Why should we be sorry for our sins? L. XVIII, Q. 201.
2) What is imperfect contrition? L. XVIII, Q. 204.
3) What is perfect contrition? L. XVIII, Q. 203.
4) How many kinds of contrition are there? L. XVIII, Q. 202.
5) Is imperfect contrition sufficient for a worthy Confession? L. XVIII, Q. 205.

Preparation. Dear children, St. Teresa of Jesus once wrote these remarkable words to a certain missionary: "Father, I beg of you, preach very often against Confessions, which are made without contrition. For the devil has no other net, with which to catch so many souls, except this." That shows you how necessary contrition is for a worthy Confession.

Yes, a certain renowned preacher once said: "Confession without contrition is a shot without a bullet, a needle without thread, an ear without the kernels." Therefore without contrition Confession is good for nothing. Let us review what we learned of that in the last lesson. *(Question the pupils briefly on the foregoing lesson.)*—The prodigal son had true contrition of heart. Why did he repent of his wicked life?—Because things were going so badly with him — that grieved him bitterly. But he also had another sorrow in his soul.—Oh, what sorrow of heart did I not cause my father! That is the right kind of sorrow.—The penitent, too, must have contrition. But between contrition and contrition there is a world of difference. Everything depends upon the "why."

Aim. Now I am going to show you, *why the penitent should feel sorry for his sins.*

Presentation. Here are three children: a child, that has made its First Holy Confession, a child that has already made its First Holy Communion, and an older child in the highest grade of the school. On Sunday the father sends the three children to church. "Children, it is time! Be good and pray, so that God may bless you." The children go away at once. But what happens? The oldest child seduces her younger sisters and says: "This is such a lovely day. Come, let us go for a walk! Others are doing it too." And actually the three children miss Holy Mass. The father hears about it. The children are sure, that that will cause great anger and bring punishment, for the father insists strictly on their going to Mass. Then, of course, they begin to feel sorrow.

The youngest child, that has not yet made its First Holy Communion, says: "Oh, if only I had not done that! I am afraid of father; I do not dare to go home." And she begins to cry. The child, that has already made its First Holy Communion, feels even greater sorrow. She had often heard it said in school: To

miss Holy Mass through one's own fault is a mortal sin. She now remembers that and begins to complain: "Oh, what have I done! How could I have been so careless! A First Communicant and not to go to church—what a disgrace!" But then she says to her sisters: "I would gladly put up with the punishment of father; for I truly deserve that. But what if I had to die now! I fear God's punishments. We have lost Heaven and deserved Hell. O God, do not let us die in sin!" Thereupon the oldest child says: "You are right, we did deserve Hell. But do you also know what we have done to the good God? God is so great and holy and we are such poor, miserable children of men; and still we did not want to obey Him. The good God is such a kind Father and we are such ungrateful children! And when I look at Jesus on the Cross, how ashamed I must feel! Really I can no longer look Him straight in the eyes. He has done so much for us, and we did not want to offer Him even a short little half hour. But never again in all my life will I do such a thing; rather die than sin."

While the children were talking like that to one another, the oldest child thinks of a good thing: "Do you know what we will do? Come, let us go into the church and beg the dear Lord with all our heart to pardon us." And immediately they kneel down before the altar and pray: "O Jesus, have mercy on us. O Jesus, pardon us our sins." Thereupon, they go home and sincerely confess all to their father: "Father forgive us; we will never do that again." Then their father pardons them once more, because they have told all sincerely and repented of it. He says: "This time I will omit the punishment; but remember it well."

All three children have contrition; but each one has a different kind of contrition. Let us see, whether they all have the right kind of contrition.

Explanation. 1. What did the youngest child say? "I am afraid of father." The child was very much in

earnest, too; yes, she even cried. Therefore, that is contrition of the heart. But I wonder if the good God will be satisfied with that contrition? The child does not even think of God. She is sorry for her sin, because she fears her father: therefore, merely because she might suffer harm and disgrace. This contrition is not bad, but neither is it the right kind of contrition. *To feel sorry for sin, because it brings us temporal loss or disgrace, is nothing but natural contrition.* Such a contrition is worth nothing in God's sight, because it is not directed to God at all. Such a sorrow is of no use for Confession. A Christian child ought to have a Christian's contrition, and that comes from the Christian Faith and is directed to God. How then ought a Christian child to think, when it wishes to make an act of contrition for its sin? This is what it ought to say to itself: Oh, what an awful thing sin is! By sin I offend the good God, Who made me out of nothing, and Who watches over and keeps me safe every single moment of my life. By sin I offend my good Jesus, Who redeemed me by His bloody death on the cross. Sin shuts me out of Heaven and condemns me to the everlasting pains of Hell. Therefore, I am sorry for my sins. That is the right kind of sorrow for a Christian. Our Catechism says: **We should be sorry for our sins, because sin is the greatest of evils and an offense against God our Creator, Preserver and Redeemer, and because it shuts us out of Heaven and condemns us to the eternal pains of Hell.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

2. Now, let us see whether the second child of our story had true Christian contrition. What did the little First Communicant say? "I am afraid of God." That is already an entirely different kind of sorrow from that of the first child. The child looks upwards and says: I have deserved Hell. Oh, how ugly sin is. Do you see? The little First Communicant has the fear of God in her heart. But to feel sorry for

sin because of the fear of God's punishment is true Christian contrition; such a sorrow is right in God's sight and proper for Confession. We can call it contrition of holy fear. This sorrow already passes beyond the natural life and is directed to the supernatural life; hence it is no longer natural, but supernatural. To be sure, it is not yet the best; it is still imperfect. Our contrition is imperfect, when we are sorry for our sins because we fear the punishments of God or because sin is so ugly in itself. Our Catechism says: **Imperfect contrition is that by which we hate what offends God, because by it we lost Heaven and deserve Hell; or because sin is so hateful in itself.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* In the eyes of God this contrition is worth its weight in silver. We might call it, therefore, simply *silver contrition.*

3. Now, the third child's turn comes. The Holy Ghost has given it very special graces. What did that little girl say? "I have offended the great God. I have been so ungrateful to my good Father in Heaven. I have grieved Jesus so bitterly." What do you think of this contrition? Is it contrition of holy fear? No, for that girl felt sorry for sin, not merely because she feared God, but rather because she loved God, Who is so good in Himself and worthy of all love. She was not thinking so much of herself, as rather of God; and she was sorry for having displeased Him, not for her own sake, but for His sake, because He is so good and worthy of all love. Yes, that child would have preferred to die rather than sin again, so great was her grief for sin and her hatred for sin. Do you see? That is contrition of holy love. That is the best kind of contrition; therefore, it is called perfect contrition. Our contrition is perfect when we feel sorry for sin, for the love of God. Our Catechism says: **Perfect contrition is that which fills us with sorrow and hatred for sin, because it offends God, Who is infinitely good in Himself and worthy of all love.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* In the sight

of God this contrition is worth its weight in gold; therefore we can call it for short *golden contrition.* Yes, this contrition of holy love is so strong, that it burns out sins from the soul like fire.

4. Now you know how many kinds of contrition there are: **There are two kinds of contrition: perfect contrition and imperfect contrition.** *(Repeat together.)*

5. Every penitent ought to try to excite in his heart an act of perfect contrition. But it is not absolutely necessary; for silver contrition, imperfect contrition, contrition of holy fear, is sufficient for Confession. Our Catechism says: **Imperfect contrition is sufficient for a worthy Confession, but we should endeavor to have perfect contrition.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

1. Natural contrition—fear of harm or disgrace.—not good for a Christian.

We should be sorry for sin because:

a) sin is the greatest evil;

b) offends God;

c) shuts us out of Heaven—condemns us to Hell.

2. Imperfect contrition—fear of God (sufficient for a good Confession) (5)
3. Perfect contrition—love of God.

Synthesis. There is a three-fold contrition. We have seen that clearly in the case of the three children. What kind of contrition did the first little child have? Contrition is natural, when we repent of sin, because it causes us temporal harm or disgrace. This contrition is useless in God's sight and for Confession. Why should a Christian feel sorry for his sins? What sort of contrition did the First Communicant have? Contrition is imperfect, when we are sorry for our sin, because we fear God's punishment, or because sin is so hateful in itself. It is called contrition of holy fear.

This contrition is like silver in God's sight. What kind of contrition did the oldest child have? Contrition is perfect, when we are sorry for sin, because we love God—contrition of holy love. This contrition is like gold in God's eyes. How many kinds of contrition are there? Is imperfect contrition sufficient for a worthy Confession? *(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. Now let us see, whether you have understood contrition properly.

1. Here is a child, that has eaten intemperately and then gets sick. Now it weeps for pain. That child is a real Magdalen, is it not? Natural contrition. A person has committed a theft and is locked up for it. Now he swears solemnly and earnestly: "I will never do that again as long as I live." What do you say about that contrition? Natural contrition. A child has grieved its mother most deeply. Therefore its father is angry. "Never come in my sight again!" he says, and he does not look at the child for a whole week and does not speak a kind word to it anymore. The child can no longer stand it and humbly begs the father to forgive all.....

2. The Prophet Jonas preached to the people of Ninive: "After forty days the city will be destroyed." Then all the people began to fast strictly and to pray and to do penance. Imperfect contrition. Why did Magdalen repent of her sinful life? For love of Jesus—therefore, perfect contrition—contrition of holy love. King David wept over his sins, so that his heart nearly broke; and how did he pray? Perfect contrition—contrition of holy love and fear. The Apostle Thomas did not want to believe that Jesus was arisen again from the dead. But when he saw his good Master, he fell down at His feet and called out in sorrow: "My Lord and my God!" Perfect contrition—contrition of holy love. Augustine was a great sinner up to his thir-

tieth year. But then he became a great Saint. Weeping he cried out: "O God, O God, too late have I loved Thee!"—Perfect contrition—contrition of holy love. What contrition did St. Peter have? Contrition of holy love burned in his soul like a fire.

Let us also humbly repent of our sins. All of you say with your lips and your heart: "My Jesus and my all, have mercy on me!"

LESSON XXIV.

Imperfect Contrition.

(Supplementary)

Catechetical Unit:

How can we excite ourselves to an act of imperfect contrition?

(N. B. Most children of this age will not as yet have committed formal mortal sins, but rather only venial sins. Therefore, here special attention is given to leading the children to contrition for their venial sins.)

Presentation. Dear children, you already know true Christian contrition. Without good contrition there is no good Confession. Let us repeat once more: When is our contrition natural? — imperfect? — perfect? *(Question the pupils briefly on the foregoing lesson.)* Now doubtless you would like to know: What shall I do to obtain true contrition? But first tell me: What evil consequences has mortal sin? Why ought we to avoid venial sins too?

Aim. Now I am going to show you: *how you ought to excite yourselves to contrition,* and particularly to contrition *of holy fear.* Let us first pray to God: "Come, O Holy Ghost, enlighten us, that we may sincerely repent of our sins."

I believe, that the most of you have no mortal sins. Happy children, for you are still God's children. But have you not as yet ever committed any venial sins?

O yes, you all have committed venial sins. Just think of your careless prayers, of your carelessness in pronouncing holy names. Just recall your disobedience, your unkind conduct towards your brothers and sisters and other children. Think of the many times you have taken thing secretly, without permission, of your lies and of the many other wicked things. Many a one imagines indeed, that those things are mere trifles. Is that true? Just look into your heart, then look up into Heaven and down into Purgatory.

Presentation and Explanation.

I. Venial Sins.

1. A little First Communicant is just going to the church. Its heart is filled with happiness, for it knows: Today Jesus is coming to me. But that child is not careful; it stumbles on a stone and falls down into the mud. Then it begins to cry bitterly: "My beautiful, white dress!" All of you surely would have sympathy for such a child, would you not? But now *look into your own heart.* In Holy Baptism you have received a wonderfully beautiful white garment. The Angels themselves were glad of that and said one to the other: Just look at that glorious heavenly garment of grace. But how does it look now? Your many venial sins are dirt spots on that white garment of the soul. If you could see it, how you would detest those sins! Children, should things remain like that? No; therefore, say with all your heart: *O my God, I have soiled the garment of grace—have mercy on me. (Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

2. Reflect further: If the garment of the soul is so soiled with filth, could God have any use for it in Heaven? No; why you would not fit in Heaven at all. You would have to feel ashamed, if you were to stand there so dirty and filthy among the Angels and Saints of Heaven. You would run away for shame and you

would not want to stay in Heaven. Do you see? Because of your sins you have *lost Heaven*—at least for a time. How foolish to sin and thereby to lose Heaven, even for a short time. Pray again together: *O my God, I have lost Heaven—have mercy on me. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. Now *look down into Purgatory!* Just consider the Poor Souls how they burn and suffer. They have no rest day and night, until all, even the smallest spots of sin, have been burned away by the fire. And how they long for the dear Lord! The Poor Souls would like to go to God; but they cannot go to God; for their sins hold them back. And now they long for Heaven! If the Poor Souls could die, they would die of homesickness for Heaven. How hard it is to wait! A single hour seems to them like a whole eternity. Children, this fire of Purgatory you also have deserved by your venial sins, and that not only once, but most likely hundreds of times. Do you want to go to Purgatory? Feel sorry again and detest your sins: *O my God, I have deserved Purgatory—have mercy on me. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Repeat once more those three little prayers.—That is how you ought to excite yourselves to contrition, if you have venial sins; that is contrition of holy fear.

But I fear, that one or the other of you may have mortal sins in his heart. Perhaps you have, through your own fault, missed Holy Mass on a Sunday, or done wicked, impure things. Poor child, look into your heart, into Heaven, into Hell.

II. Mortal Sins.

1. Think of your Holy Baptism. O how beautiful was not your *soul* at that time. It was cleansed in the Blood of Jesus Christ. The Holy Ghost adorned it with the wonderful heavenly garment of grace. The heavenly Father Himself was filled with joy and said to His Angels: Behold, that is My dear child, in whom I am pleased! What a great thing it is to be a child

of God! But mortal sin was committed. Gone is all the heavenly beauty from your soul, the precious heavenly garment is lost, the soul is soiled, as it were, with the filth of Hell. Poor child, you are no longer a child of God. The Angels mourn and the wicked spirits rejoice. What an awful evil mortal sin really is! Child, does that not grieve you in your soul? Do you want to remain in mortal sin? No; you want, oh so much, to obtain a pure heart. Then pray: *O my God, I have lost Thy grace—have mercy on me. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Whoever prays like that with all his heart, has already the contrition of a Christian. Tell me, why?—To lose God's grace, no longer to be a child of God, all that is a punishment of God. To feel sorry for one's sins for those reasons—that is imperfect contrition—contrition of holy fear, or silver contrition.

2. Child, *look up into Heaven.* Look up into Heaven with the eyes of your soul. Thousands and thousands of Angels are soaring about the throne of God. They are praying and singing and rejoicing, so that the whole Heavens are re-echoing: Holy, holy, holy! And multitudes of Saints are standing before God's throne. They are allowed to shine like eternal lights in the temple of Heaven and pray and sing with the Angels: Holy, holy, holy! But high above all the Angels and Saints there is a throne. And on that throne sits a Lady, more lovely and glorious than the morning sun; and a crown of twelve stars is upon her head. Who is this Lady? It is Mary, the Queen of Heaven. How happy are not the Angels and Saints to be with God's dear Mother! But the eyes of the soul see even more. There above the highest heights, surrounded by a whole sea of light, Jesus is enthroned and the Most Blessed Trinity. And the Angels and the Saints may look upon God face to face. That is a glory and a happiness, which no human mind can conceive and no human heart describe.

So beautiful is Heaven! And now just think: This Heaven with all its happiness, you have lost, lost for a short, sinful pleasure. Oh, how could you be so foolish! Poor child, you have every reason to mourn and to weep. If you were to die in your sins, what then?—Then your Guardian Angel will stand at your deathbed with a flaming sword and say: Away! you have lost Heaven—lost it forever! Repent and say: *O my God, I have lost Heaven—have mercy on me! (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

To lose Heaven is a punishment of God. To feel sorry for one's sins for that reason, what sort of contrition is that? Contrition of holy fear is sufficient for Confession; God will pardon the poor sinner.

3. Finally, dear child, *look into Hell!* What, if you were now to die in mortal sin? Your soul will go down into the abyss. Ever deeper and deeper it descends, until it lies buried in a sea of fire. There it hears the heart-rending lamentation and howling and gnashing of teeth of the damned. The evil spirits fall upon the soul and scourge it with fiery scourges. Terribly does the fire burn the soul—it would like to burn out the sins from the soul, but that is impossible. And this pain and suffering will never cease, never for all eternity. You can only burn and burn forever and suffer without ceasing. Poor child, do you want that? No, not for any price! Then away with your sins! Pray: *O my God, I have deserved Hell—have mercy on me! (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Hell is a punishment of God for mortal sin. To feel sorry for one's sins for fear of Hell, that again is imperfect contrition, or contrition of holy fear. If a penitent has this contrition in his soul, his Confession is valid; a child of sin is changed into a child of grace.

Write on the blackboard:

Imperfect Contrition:

—soiled the garment of grace;
—lost Heaven (!);
—deserved Purgatory;
—lost grace;
—lost Heaven;
—deserved Hell.

Synthesis. We have now seen how you should make an act of imperfect contrition. If you have only venial sins, where ought you to look? First a glance into your own heart, then into Heaven, then into Purgatory! How ought you to pray at the same time?—But if you have mortal sins, where ought you to look?—Again first into your own soul, then a glance into Heaven, finally a glance into Hell. How ought you to pray at the same time?—But remember well! alone you cannot repent of your sins at all; the Holy Ghost must help you with His grace. We should with the help of God's grace earnestly consider (call to mind), that by sin we have deserved to be punished by God. *(Have the pupils read the answers from the blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. Now let us briefly again go through the entire examination of conscience. Now think seriously of your sins! Let us pause a little at each Commandment, so that we can think. 1. Commandment—Prayer; Faith, Hope, Charity; Religion. 2. Commandment—Holy Names. You will perhaps have found many venial sins. Now let us at once say the act of contrition together.

O my God, I have soiled the garment of grace—have mercy on me!

O my God, I have lost Heaven—have mercy on me!

O my God, I have deserved Purgatory—have mercy on me!

2. Just think again: Did you perhaps also soil your soul by mortal sins? Do you know what you have lost in that case? Do you know what you have deserved? —O good Holy Ghost, help me, to feel sorry for all!

O my God, I have lost Thy grace—have mercy on me!

O my God, I have lost Heaven—have mercy on me!

O my God, I have deserved Hell—have mercy on me!

LESSON XXV.

Perfect Contrition.

(Supplementary)

Catechetical Unit:

How can we excite ourselves to an act of perfect contrition?

Preparation. Dear children, contrition of holy fear is like silver in the sight of God. You already know how to make such an act. Let us first review this teaching. *(Question the pupils briefly on the preceding lesson.)* Silver contrition is precious indeed; but more precious is golden contrition. The former you *must* have, the latter you *ought* to have for Confession. Yes, contrition of holy love can work wonders in the soul. You will soon see what I mean. But first tell me: In what does the malice of mortal sin consist? —When is our contrition perfect?—

Aim. Now pay attention! I am going to show you *how you ought to excite in yourselves an act of perfect contrition.*

Presentation and Explanation.

1. *Look up at the cross!* Imagine, that Jesus suddenly becomes alive and is looking at you so kindly and lovingly. Then he opens His mouth and begins to speak: Child, what have you done to Me by your

sins! Look at the painful crown of thorns on My head: I bear it gladly—for love of you—for your sins! Look at My eyes, how they are all overrun with blood: I bear it gladly—for love of you—for your sins! Look at My hands and feet, how they are firmly nailed to the shameful wood of the cross: I suffer it gladly—for love of you—for your sins! Look at My body, how it is maltreated, covered with wounds: I will not complain—for love of you. I will die on the cross, die for love—for your sins. Child, have you no longer a little spark of love in your heart for Me? Do you want to scourge Me again and crown Me with thorns and crucify Me by your sins? Behold, gladly would I endure all this again, gladly would I die again, if only your poor soul is not lost: so great is My love!

Children, can you still be cold and indifferent? What do you want to answer Jesus? You can only say: My Jesus, I, too, am the cause of Thy suffering and death. Then pray: *O my Jesus, Who didst die for me on the cross—have mercy on me. (Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

If thus for love of Jesus you feel sorry for your sins, you have contrition of holy love, perfect contrition. This contrition of love is so mighty, that it burns at once from the soul all sins. Do you now understand, why I said, that contrition of holy love can work wonders in the soul? If you have this contrition of holy love in your heart, your heart is made pure from sin immediately, even before Confession. To be sure, you must still confess your sins; for God wills that and Jesus has expressly commanded it. Every penitent ought earnestly to endeavor to excite himself to an act of contrition of holy love. That, of course, is not so easy; but it can be done with the grace of God. Let us say together: *We ought with the grace of God earnestly to consider, that Jesus died on the cross for our sins.*

2. Now *look up into Heaven!* Up there, there dwells a very good Father. He loves you as only the best of fathers can love his child. Therefore He watches over you as the apple of His eye and has given you a special Guardian Angel and has commanded him: Guard My child and lead it safely to Heaven! And how the heavenly Father already rejoices, that He will some day be able to press you to His kind fatherly Heart! And how much good has He not already done for you!—He gave you life and He gives it to you again every moment. He gave you a healthy body. He gives you your daily bread. Yes, He has given you the greatest gift, that God can give—the Christ Child. Thus God is your best Father, and your greatest Benefactor. What does He want from you in return for all that? Nothing, except that you love Him like good children: Child, give Me thy Heart!

But how ungrateful you have been; how often you have offended your good Father in Heaven! Just reflect a little: God gave you your eyes—and you have misused them to sin. Is not that ungrateful? God gave you your ears—and you have willingly listened to wicked talk. Is not that ungrateful? God gave you a tongue—and you have spoken sinful words, or even made use of detestable, filthy talk. Tell me yourself: Is that a child's love and a child's gratitude? What should you do now? You ought to beg pardon of your best of fathers and greatest of benefactors, for having been so ungrateful and unkind: *O my God, I have offended Thee, the best of fathers and the greatest of benefactors—have mercy on me! (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

To feel sorry for your sins, because you have been ungrateful and unloving towards God, that is again contrition of holy love; that is worth its weight in gold in God's sight and as mighty as fire. Of course, this fire of holy love only the Holy Ghost can light in your soul; He must assist you with His holy grace. Let us repeat together: *We ought with the help of*

God's grace earnestly to consider, that sin offends God, the best of fathers and the greatest of benefactors.

3. When children see something beautiful, perhaps a golden ring and in it a sparkling jewel, they would like to have it very much; for such a ring is a precious treasure. But what is the most precious ring as compared with God? Nothing but a worthless thing. Just look with the eyes of your soul into Heaven! Thousands and thousands of Angels stand before God's throne and one is more beautiful and glorious than the other. And in Heaven there are as many Saints as there are stars in the heavens and each one may shine in heavenly glory. But what are all the Angels and Saints together when compared with the glory of God? It is as though the morning sun, sparkling in glory, rises on the heavens: before its splendor all the stars grow pale and disappear. Thus, too, must all the Angels and Saints grow pale before the splendor of God. And now reflect: The Angels and Saints may continually look upon and adore and sing to God. Then they glow in holy joy and swim in a sea of happiness. They look and look and cannot grow tired of the sight of God's glory. And even though they look at God for thousands of years, they imagine, that it was only a moment, and the happiness begins all over again. Is not *God the highest and most loving good?* Is He not worthy of all our love?

Children, would you not like, some day, to look at this highest and most loving good and adore and praise it for all eternity? You all want some day to have a share in that, do you not? But what have you done? Sin was dearer to you than God, the highest good. Must not that offend the dear Lord? Let us ask Him together to pardon us for that: *O my God, I have offended Thee, the highest and most amiable good—have mercy on me! (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

If thus you feel sorry for your sins for love of God, again you have contrition of holy love. But can you

obtain this contrition alone? No, the Holy Ghost must help you; He must make your heart warm with love by His grace. Let us say together: *We ought with the assistance of God's grace earnestly to consider that sin offends God, the highest and most amiable good.*

Write on the blackboard:

Perfect Contrition:

1. Jesus—died for me on the cross;
2. I have offended God—the best of fathers, the greatest of benefactors;
3. I have offended God—the highest, most amiable good.

Application. 1. Now, perhaps you might have one more doubt. How must a person, that has only venial sins, make an act of contrition? A person, that is guilty of mortal sins? Now how about contrition of holy love? Golden contrition is the same for all, great and small sinners. See, Jesus had to suffer and die for little sins, too. Venial sins also offend God, the best of fathers and the greatest of benefactors. Just recall the question: Why ought we carefully to avoid also venial sins?

2. Now reflect once more a little on your sins. Pray to the Holy Ghost for His grace: "Come, O Holy Ghost." Then let us pray together with heart and lips the act of contrition of holy fear and holy love, just as a child ought to pray, if it has only venial sins.

O my God, I have soiled the garment of grace—have mercy on me!

O my God, I have lost Heaven—have mercy on me!

O my God, I have deserved Purgatory—have mercy on me!

O my Jesus, Who didst die for me on the cross—have mercy on me!

O my God, I have offended Thee, the best of fathers and the greatest of benefactors—have mercy on me!

O my God, I have offended Thee, the highest and most amiable good—have mercy on me!

How must a child that has mortal sins make an act of imperfect and perfect contrition?—

(N. B. The act of contrition must be practised until all the children are familiar with it. The catechist ought not to think, that this practice is unnecessary. Experience teaches, that many children, who go to Confession, do not know at all, how and why to feel sorry for their sins.)

LESSON XXVI.

Contrition—When?

(Supplementary)

Catechetical Unit:

1) When should we make an act of perfect contrition? (Deharbe)

2) Can contrition ever be supplied in case of necessity? (Deharbe)

3) When must we make an act of contrition in the Sacrament of Penance? (Deharbe)

Preparation. Dear children, once a great sinner came to St. Vincent of Paul. The Saint had a sincere sympathy for the poor man. For he thought to himself: You also have an immortal soul; and even though it is soiled with the detestable filth of sin, still it may not be lost. Therefore Vincent spoke kindly to the sinner: "My dear friend! Confess your sins sincerely and begin a new life again." However, all his talk was useless. At his departure the Saint gave the sinner a little picture of Jesus, as He falls to the earth under the heavy load of the cross. "Poor friend," Vincent said: "take this little picture as a souvenir of my well-meant, but unfortunately fruitless advice. Only *one* thing I ask of you: Look at this picture each night before you go to sleep, even though it be only for a few moments." "Nothing else?" asked the sinner.

"No, nothing else, but think also of the fact that your sins have cast the Saviour down to the earth. How long will you allow Him to lie under the weight of your sins?" "Oh, I can do that," replied the sinner smiling. Evening came and as he had promised he looked at the picture. "A monotonous picture," he said to himself; "what might it mean?" On the second evening he gazed at the picture once more. "That picture is not so bad after all," he said quietly to himself; "really, I am almost beginning to like it." On the third evening as he again looked at the picture, suddenly he became all serious. His heart was deeply moved as he gazed at the dear Saviour. Then he fell down upon his knees, and began to pray and to weep over his sins. That night seemed to him like a little eternity; he could scarcely wait for the morning. When it was daylight, he went to the Saint and said: "I cannot stand it any longer. I want to confess my sins and become a different man." All filled with contrition he acknowledged his guilt and found peace for his poor heart. So powerful is the grace of God. Dear children, let us first review the lesson on the act of perfect contrition. *(Question the pupils briefly on the foregoing lesson.)*

What power has contrition of holy love? It purifies the soul from all sins. That is very important for the Christian life. Contrition has already saved many souls from Hell for Heaven. I am going to tell you a story about that.

Aim. From this story you will learn: *when you ought to make an act of perfect contrition.*

Presentation. On the eighth of December, 1881, a great theater burned down in the city of Vienna, Austria. That was a frightful spectacle. While every one was sitting quietly and looking at the stage, suddenly the cry was heard: "Fire! Fire!" Already the flames were blazing high and fiercely. Everyone pushes forward towards the exits; for every one wants to save his own life. The people cry and weep and

push one another. Many are thrown down to the floor and stepped upon. In a short time the sea of flames spreads over the whole building. Hundreds of people were present, when the fire broke out; among them many children too. Many of them met an awful death in the smoke and the flames.

A little girl of nine years of age fortunately was saved. Later on she said to her teacher in Christian Doctrine: "The people cried out and wept and wrung their hands; others prayed in their terror of death. Where I happened to be, there were about forty persons all huddled together. A man next to me continually made the sign of the cross and shouted for help in his despair. But five children—I think they were brothers and sisters—knelt down and prayed with me."

Then the catechist asked the little girl: "But child, what did you pray in danger of death?" The child replied: "I prayed to the Holy Guardian Angel and then—an act of perfect contrition. My aunt was there also with me. She is a pious woman and goes to Confession often. She knew very well, that in danger of death one ought to make an act of perfect contrition; but for fear she could no longer say the prayer; I had to say the act of contrition for her. While we were praying, other people knelt down beside us. My aunt told them what power this act of contrition had. Then most of the people prayed with us, but I said the prayer aloud. Meanwhile the firemen had come and we were saved from the danger of death." The theater was soon changed into a church, so that prayers and the Holy Mass could be offered for the souls of the dead. ("Ambrosius," 1882.)

Explanation. 1. Did the little girl of our story act properly? The child was in danger of death. Already the theater was beginning to fill up with smoke. Closer and closer the fiery flames came. It could not be much longer, before all would have been hopelessly lost. To

burn alive—what an awful death! What did the other people do while in danger of death? They all lost their heads and no longer knew how to save themselves. Even that little girl's aunt, who was a pious woman, indeed, was all bewildered with fright. But what did the little girl do in danger of death? She made an act of perfect contrition immediately. Why an act of perfect contrition? The girl was only nine years of age; how did she come to say that prayer? The child had heard in school, what power contrition of holy love has. She knew very well: What kind of contrition acts in the soul like a fire and immediately burns out of the soul every sin. The child remembered that well, and when in danger of death that thought came into her mind at once. You, too, ought to remember that well: **In the danger of death we should at once make an act of perfect contrition.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

But only contrition of love has that wonderful power. Contrition of holy fear is not so powerful; it cannot help us at all in danger of death. Whoever has only imperfect contrition, must also confess; whoever has contrition of love (perfect contrition) needs only the good intention of confessing his sins. Do you think, that those other people had the good intention? Indeed, I believe, that not a single one of them wanted to die in his sins. They all would have liked to go to Confession first. Remember that well: In case of necessity there is a substitute for Confession—contrition of holy love with a firm purpose of confessing. **If one cannot receive the Sacrament of Penance, it can be supplied by an act of perfect contrition and the earnest resolution to confess one's sins, as soon as the occasion comes.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

2. But really, we are always in danger of death. Is not that true?—Yes; for our life hangs only on a thread. Not very much is required to break the thread. From life to death it is only a step. If a person dies in

sin, what then?—He goes into eternal death, into Hell. Therefore mortal sin is the greatest misfortune.

But it is still worse to remain in mortal sin. What does one do, when a person gets sick? One calls the doctor at once, is that not so? The longer one waits, the worse does the evil grow. Now a person in mortal sin has a mortal, a deadly, disease in the soul. The longer he waits, the worse does his case become. Why?—The poor sinner falls deeper and deeper into the misery of sin. What ought such a person to do?—He ought to go to the doctor at once and confess; that would be the best thing for him to do. But unfortunately that cannot always be done immediately. But one thing is possible with God's grace—to make an act of perfect contrition. A person in mortal sin ought to do that as soon as possible, if his immortal soul is dear to him.—**We ought to make an act of perfect contrition as often as we have the misfortune to commit a mortal sin and cannot immediately go to confession.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*—Among those people, that were saved, there were most likely many, that were guilty of mortal sins. If they were good Christians, what would they have done immediately after their sin?—Yes, that is the Christian way—to confess the sin at once, or at least to feel sorry for it; but to remain in mortal sin, that is the greatest foolishness.

3. Many died a terrible death in the fire. Perhaps there were also some among them, that had mortal sin. They had not time to feel sorry for their sins; for death suddenly surprised them and seized them with its claws. Others in danger of death thought only of being saved, but not of having contrition for their sins. Many knew nothing at all of the wondrous power of perfect contrition. Thus they died in their sins; where are they now?—Those poor persons are now burning in the fire of Hell and will burn forever. Not only their bodies burned miserably, but their souls also are burning in the eternal fire. For **contrition is so necessary, that it cannot be supplied by anything or in any case.**

(Repeat together; use the blackboard.) I would like to write that in your hearts with indelible letters: Without contrition—no pardon: without contrition—no salvation: without contrition—lost forever! Do you now see how precious, yes, how inestimable contrition of holy love is? Yes, like an Angel Guardian contrition of holy love has already saved countless souls from eternal death and has brought them to Heaven.

4. Without contrition no sin will ever be forgiven. For contrition is the *chief* thing in Confession. When, therefore, should the penitent make an act of contrition? Will he wait until he is already kneeling in the confessional? No, a conscientious penitent will make an act of contrition immediately after the examination of conscience.—**We must make the act of contrition before our Confession, or, at least, before the priest gives us Absolution.** *(Repeat together; use the black board.)* That is clear; for after the absolution it is too late. First contrition, then absolution.

Write on the blackboard:

1. Perfect Contrition { 1. in danger of death; 2. after mortal sin.
2. Without contrition—no pardon.
3. Contrition—before Confession—(absolution).

Synthesis. What you have heard today, you ought never to forget throughout your whole life.—To confess is necessary. But what can take the place of Confession in case of necessity?—When must one make an act of contrition in Confession?—What contrition is sufficient for Confession?—When ought one to make an act of contrition outside of Confession?—What kind of contrition should we try to make?—Can contrition also be supplied in case of necessity?—Therefore either feel sorry for your sins or burn for them some day! *(Have the pupils read the answers*

from the blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)

Application. 1. Do you still know, what a good child ought to do in the evening?—Did you up till now examine your conscience? Did you feel sorry for your sins each time? Many a man lay down at night perfectly well and never got up again in the morning; he died suddenly in his sins. To die without Confession and contrition—what an awakening must that not be in eternity! Would you like to die like that some time? And yet, one can say in advance almost with certainty, that some of you also will die without Confession. Do you want to die also without contrition? Then accustom yourselves to this: Examine your conscience every evening and each time make an act of contrition of holy love! That is the way to die well.

2. It might easily happen, that your father or mother or somebody else of the family suddenly gets sick unto death. What is to be done then?—Just listen to how a good boy acted! Once his father got very sick, yes, sick unto death. Weeping and lamenting all stood about the sick-bed of the father. Only the boy remained calm, took the crucifix from the wall and put it into his father's hands. Then he recited slowly for him the act of perfect contrition and the desire: Oh! if only I could confess and go to Holy Communion. Before the priest arrived, the father had already died. —The boy performed his task well. That is the proper thing to do. Remember that! Perhaps thus you also can save an immortal soul for Heaven.

3. But it might also happen that you too will get into the danger of death just like the child, about whom I told you in today's story: you might choke, drown, fall down or be run over. What ought you to do then at once?—If you are no longer able to save your life, at least save your soul—by an act of contrition of holy love.

LESSON XXVII.

Purpose of Amendment.

Catechetical Unit:

1) What must contrition necessarily include? (Deharbe.)

2) What do you mean by the firm purpose of sinning no more? L. XVIII, Q. 206.

3) What are the qualities of a good purpose of sinning no more? (Deharbe.)

Preparation. Dear children, a man commits a murder. They hang him. He may be very sorry for it; no matter, they will not forgive him; they hang him. A man commits the most terrible crimes against God; the man is sorry, God forgives him! Let us review this teaching. *(Question the pupils briefly on the preceding lesson.)*—Contrition has a brother—it is the firm purpose of sinning no more. Think again of the prodigal son! He said to himself: "I will arise and go to my father." What did he resolve to do at the same time in his heart?—If my father receives me again, henceforth I will be a good and a faithful son. He wanted earnestly to amend his life. Thus also must a person act, who wishes to go to Confession.

Aim. I must now show you a little more exactly: *what the sinner must resolve to do, when he confesses.* —But first a story of how a great sinner became a great and holy penitent:—it is Margaret (of Cortona).

Presentation. Margaret was a young and beautiful child. But that very thing was her misfortune. When she became a young lady, she secretly left her father's house and led a wicked, sinful life. Then something happened, that moved her heart deeply. The companion of her sins was murdered. Margaret found the corpse in the bushes in a woods; it was covered all over with blood and was already spreading a horrible odor of corruption. What a sight for the sinner!

Silent and dazed with astonishment she gazed at the corpse. At that moment a ray of grace fell into her soul. She sighed: "Oh, how quickly all sinful pleasure and all earthly joys pass away! I wonder, where his soul is? Oh, merciful God! I will do penance."

Immediately she gave away all her ornaments. With a rope about her neck she knelt before the door of the church and begged those that passed by: "Forgive me! I have given such a wicked example!" Her father heard of it and was furious over it. In his anger he cast out his daughter from the house: it was an awful night. Margaret spent the night in the garden. The wicked enemy whispered to her: "What have you now with all your penance? God has forsaken you; your father has put you out. Continue your life of sin. You cannot be helped any more!" However, Margaret sighed unceasingly: "O Jesus, have mercy on me!" Then suddenly she heard a voice in her heart: "Arise and confess your sins, all the sins of your whole life!"

Margaret obeyed at once the interior counsel, confessed all and wept bitterly over her wicked life, and did not want to have anything more to do with her sins. She began to do penance most zealously. After the hard work of the day, she spent several hours of the night in prayer, and thought a great deal about Christ's bitter sufferings and death. However, Satan would not allow her any rest. Again he came and whispered into her heart in a very flattering manner: "Stop your penance! It is enough. God has already pardoned your sins. Enjoy again the pleasures of life!" But the Saint would not allow herself to be deceived. On the contrary she said: "Away, false serpent!"

Then she knelt down before a picture of the Crucified and prayed a long time and with perseverance. Thus did the penitent continue to do during her whole life—for twenty-four years longer. Then she died as a Saint.

Explanation. 1. (a) Margaret was on the road to Hell. But she turned back, while there was still time. How did that happen?—Margaret saw the corpse of the sinner. She was moved so mightily at that sight, that her heart trembled with terror. But do you think that for that reason she was already converted? O no, without God's grace she would have continued her life of sin. But then the Holy Ghost suddenly enlightened her mind. Now indeed her eyes were opened: What a miserable sinner I am! And she wept bitter tears of contrition.—There you see again, how much we need the Holy Ghost for Confession. Consequently we pray: "Come, Holy Ghost, and enlighten my mind, that I may rightly know my sins and repent of them!"

However, soon there came a severe trial for Margaret. How did Satan try to deceive her?—"God has abandoned you. You cannot be helped any more! Therefore turn away from God and despair!" Did Margaret listen to the voice of the tempter?—No, she merely continued to pray: "O Jesus, have mercy on me!" What did she think in her heart at the same time?—My sins are great indeed, but God's mercy is still greater. He will not abandon me, but will pardon me all: that is my hope. That was proper and good. It is not enough to feel sorry: *contrition must necessarily include the hope of pardon. (Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

b) While Margaret was still praying, she heard a voice within saying: "Confess all your sins!" She obeyed at once; for it was the voice of God's grace. In Confession she found peace once more. But tell me: what did Margaret resolve to do at Confession?—I am firmly resolved to begin an entirely new life. Away with sin! I will have nothing more to do with it and with everything that might lead me to sin. In all earnestness I am determined to lead a better life: from now on I am going to live for God and Heaven only. Thus must every penitent think and resolve to

do. It is not enough to feel sorry: *contrition must necessarily include the purpose of sinning no more, the resolution of amendment. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* 2. Our Catechism says: **By a firm purpose of sinning no more I mean a fixed resolve not only to avoid all mortal sin, but also its near occasions.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

But did Margaret really have this firm purpose of sinning no more?—Soon after the tempter came again. But this time he spoke differently.—"You have done enough penance. Enjoy life again!" Why suddenly so friendly?—The false serpent hoped: If she again becomes a child of the world, she will soon again be a sinner, and then she is mine! Margaret conquered the temptation victoriously. Just as Christ once said, so she also said in holy anger: "Begone, Saten!" So firm and fixed was her resolution of sinning no more. There one sees clearly: her contrition was like genuine gold. For contrition is hatred of sin. But whoever hates sin, will not commit sin any longer, not at any cost.

3. Let us look at this good resolution a little more closely. Margaret had a burning contrition for her sins in her heart. How was her contrition?—Repeat: When is our contrition interior?—Now just as sincere as her contrition was her firm purpose of sinning no more. "I will amend my life and sin no more!" thus did the sinner speak, not merely with her lips, but also with her heart. Yes, such was her holy earnestness. Her purpose of sinning no more was interior.—*Our purpose of sinning no more must be interior. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* Margaret knew very well: God does not look upon the lips, but upon the heart. He that only says, I am going to amend my life, but really does not want to do that in all earnestness, is a hypocrite in God's eyes.

4. Margaret repented of all the sins of her life and wept over them. What kind of sorrow had she?—Tell me again: When is our contrition universal?—As her

contrition, so, too, was her purpose of sinning no more. "Rather die than sin again!"—thus was she firmly resolved to do.—*Our firm purpose of sinning no more must be universal. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

5. If some one had offered her all the treasures of the world for a single mortal sin, she would have despised them all: Away! Not another mortal sin at any cost. Sin is the greatest evil that can befall me. When is our contrition sovereign?—As her contrition, so also, her purpose of amendment. *Our purpose of sinning no more must be sovereign. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

6. Why did Margaret repent of her sinful life?—For fear of God's punishment and for love of God. That is supernatural contrition. But the holy penitent henceforth wanted to have nothing more to do with sin; why?—She looked higher and thought: My Jesus, I will never leave Thee again! My God is dearer to me. Sin would make me unhappy forever. Her purpose of sinning no more was supernatural.—*Our purpose of sinning no more must, like contrition, be supernatural. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*—

Write on the blackboard:

1. To contrition belong
    1. the hope of pardon;
    2. the firm purpose of sinning no more.
2. Firm purpose of sinning no more—of avoiding all mortal sins and near occasions of sin.
3. Purpose of amendment:
    a) interior—in the heart;
    b) universal—no more mortal sins;
    c) sovereign—no mortal sin at any cost;
    d) supernatural — God's punishment — God's love.

Synthesis. Contrition and the purpose of amendment are like two brothers. Brothers often look like each other. Contrition and the purpose of amendment look like each other. Let us remember therefore: What must necessarily be included in contrition?—What do you mean by the firm purpose of sinning no more?—How must our firm purpose of amendment be?—When is it interior?—universal?—sovereign?—supernatural?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and the blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. Margaret was a sinner and became a Saint. Who would have believed it! There you see, even the greatest sinner may not despair. He may not do as Judas did.—He felt terribly sorry for his sin. His sin burned in his soul like a glowing iron; the blood money burned his hands. Then he went to the High Council and threw the money down at their feet and said: "There you have your sinful money again! I have betrayed innocent blood!" That was all proper. But what ought the unhappy Apostle to have done?—He ought to have thought: Even though I have sinned grievously, Jesus will nevertheless pardon me! I am going to beg Him to pardon me. However, the betrayer said: "My sin is too great; for me there is no forgiveness any more." He had no hope any longer and was lost.—Cain said also: "My sin is too great." Entirely differently did the prodigal son act. He said: "I will arise and go home to my father." He thought to himself: He is after all my father and will not cast me out! Thus must the sinner think and hope: God is after all my Father. Jesus wanted to suffer and die for me also. God will pardon me all.

2. The holy penitent Margaret faithfully kept her firm purpose of sinning no more. Who also did the same?—David, Peter, Magdalen. Many a sinner goes to Confession, but he is not in earnest with his purpose of amendment. What do you say to that?—Such

a penitent has not contrition either. A Confession like that is worth as much as a nut without a kernel. What will God say to that?—If you are not willing to give up sin, I cannot forgive your sin, either.

3. Recall again what I have said to you about your chief fault — your predominant sin. — You ought to fight that daily. You should also have that in mind, when you make your firm purpose of sinning no more: I am going to avoid my predominant sin! For your chief sin is your chief enemy!

LESSON XXVIII.

Proximate Occasions of Sin.

Catechetical Unit:

1) What do you mean by the near occasion of sin? L. XVIII, Q. 207.

2) What must he be determined to do who forms a firm and sincere resolution of amendment? (first half: Deharbe.)

3) What ought they to consider, who will not avoid the proximate occasion or will not desist from their habitual sins? (Deharbe.)

Preparation. Dear children, St. Bonaventure tells a remarkable story. One day a wolf went to confession. Very sincerely he told his robberies and promised in tears to amend his life. But during the confession suddenly a great fear seized hold of him. Very much excited he looked about several times; for he noticed that the sheep were running away one after the other. He, therefore, begged the confessor: "Please, father, hurry a little, otherwise I will not be able to catch the sheep!"—Do you understand the fable?—There is a serious teaching contained in that story. Many a penitent acts as did that wolf. They confess their sins; but even while confessing they are thinking to themselves: After all I am going to commit this or

that sin again! The good resolution of amendment is lacking. But that is necessary for contrition. You already know what the firm purpose of sinning no more is. Let us first review that. *(Question the pupils briefly on the preceding lesson.)*—However, you do not yet know all that belongs to contrition.

Aim. I am now going to show you even more clearly: *what a penitent must resolve to do.*

Presentation. A boy liked to go with bad companions. His father warned him, saying: "Keep away from those boys! They are no company for you." But the inexperienced boy answered: "Oh! father, they will not harm me." But his father was in great distress; for he loved his child as the apple of his eye. Therefore he determined to show the boy what danger threatened him. He filled a little box with the most beautiful apricots, that glistened like gold and purple. But among the good fruit he placed also a few rotten apricots. Then the father said: "My child! I give you this, so that you may see, how I love you." The boy was filled with gratitude and joy. He counted the precious fruit carefully and examined them. Then suddenly he cried out: "But father, there are some rotten ones among them!" "That does not matter," the father answered; "they will not spoil the good ones." "No, father, I am afraid that the rotten ones will spoil the good fruit also." "Just let them alone; let us try and see!" Then the little box was locked and the father took the key.

But the boy had no rest. Soon he came again to his father and asked for the key, in order that he might see for himself. He opened the box. But what was he obliged to behold? The beautiful color of the fruit was gone; all the apricots were rotten and gave forth a bad odor. The boy commenced to cry: "But father, I said that from the start; now they are all rotten!" The father replied: "My child! do you know what I did that for? I wanted to show you, how that which

is rotten affects that which is good and healthy. See! thus do the bad spoil the good. I warned you against your bad companions. But you said: There is no danger; they will not harm me. You are sad, because the beautiful fruit is spoiled. But if your heart were spoiled, much more, yes, all would be lost."

Explanation: 1. This boy wanted to be wiser than his father. His father had warned him: "Keep away from those bad boys! They are no company for you." But what did the boy answer?—"Oh! they will not harm me." However, the father knew well enough: Those bad boys will lead you astray too. For there you will see and hear bad things; and what they do, you will imitate. The father is entirely right. Whoever goes with wicked companions, will also become bad; the danger is too great. Just as the bad fruit corrupts the good fruit, so also bad children spoil good children. Bad companions, therefore, are a great danger to sin: a near occasion to sin (a proximate occasion). For there the occasion of seeing, and hearing, and learning evil, is very near.

But there are also other occasions of sin. A child reads a bad book or looks at a bad picture. The book and the picture are near occasions of sin. Why?—The evil pleases the child and then the child commits sin.—A good child plays with bad children and it falls into sin. Do you see how evil comes from such conduct? That play is a near occasion of sin.—A man goes into a theater and each time he comes out with sin on his soul. That theater is a near occasion of sin for him. Why?—He knows very well, that he falls into sin each time that he goes there.—Let us remember therefore: A near occasion of sin is a great danger of sin or anything, that leads us to commit sin. Our Catechism says: **By the near occasion of sin I mean all the persons, places and things, that may easily lead us into sin.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

2. Now that boy wants to confess. He has already a goodly number of sins, venial and perhaps also some mortal sins. You already know, what he must resolve to do.—From now on no more mortal sins! That is my firm resolution.—*The sinner must be determined to avoid, at least, all grievous sins. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* That is clear. If there is only *one* mortal sin, which he does not feel sorry for, he remains in mortal sin. If there is only *one* mortal sin, which he does not wish to avoid, but thinks: "I will commit that again anyway," he is and remains in mortal sin.

But what if the boy has only venial sins, what ought he to resolve to do?—I resolve to avoid at least *one* venial sin (for instance, being disobedient, telling lies). He must determine to do that, otherwise his Confession is invalid in the eyes of God. But it is still better, if he resolves: I am going to avoid all sins; at least, I will not commit a single sin deliberately and willfully. Then the dear Lord will be pleased with that child and bless it.

3. The boy wanted to avoid his sins. Is that enough?—No, he must also avoid the near occasion of sin; he may no longer go with those wicked companions. Why? Otherwise they will most surely lead him to commit serious sins. His father has already told him that. The good God says so too: "He that loveth danger, shall perish in it" (Ecclesiasticus iii, 27). What does that mean?—Whoever carelessly goes into danger of sin, will fall into sin and lose the life of grace and, perhaps in the end, also eternal life. That is certainly very true.—*The sinner must be determined to shun the danger, and especially the proximate danger, of sin. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* Whoever is unwilling to avoid the near occasion of sin, is unwilling to avoid sin; he has not a sincere resolution of amendment and risks his poor soul.

4. But the boy says to himself: I like my good companions so much, that I cannot give them up! Therefore he is unwilling to avoid the danger of sin. Then too in regard to a certain mortal sin, he thinks to himself: "Oh! I will commit that very soon again anyway!" Therefore he does not want to avoid that sin. And he goes to Confession that way and the priest gives him absolution. Do you think, that he is really absolved from his sins?—No, God looks into his heart and has not absolved him from his sins. The absolution of the priest is useless. The boy will carry all his sins out again from the confessional, and in addition another mortal sin. For to confess unworthily, is a mortal sin (a sacrilege). Therefore after Confession he has even greater guilt than before. Whoever does not want to avoid the danger of sin, or the near occasion of sin, ought to remember: *the priest's absolution is of no avail, but only aggravates his guilt. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* Such a sinner prefers sin to God and God cannot forgive such a one.

Write on the blackboard:

1. Near occasion—dangers of sin (persons, places, things, that lead to sin).
2. Resolution—to avoid the danger to sin—to avoid mortal sin.
3. Without good resolution — no pardon — (sacrilege).

Synthesis. Do you now see, how important the firm purpose of amendment is? Confession without the resolution of amendment is useless in God's sight. Such a person only wants to deceive God; but really he only deceives himself. Better not to confess at all than to confess without the resolution of amendment! —What must he be resolved to do, who makes a good, earnest resolution of amendment?—What do you mean by the near (proximate) occasions of sins? — What

ought they to remember, who are unwilling to avoid sin, or the danger to sin?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and the blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. Now just examine your conscience. Did you ever go with bad companions like the boy of our story? They perhaps taught you how to sin—to steal, to lie, or even to do impure things. Or did you perhaps see a shameless picture in a store window and remain standing and look into that window with bad pleasure?—May you do that? Is that right in God's sight? What must such a child resolve to do?—The dear Lord tells you: "Flee from sins as from the face of a serpent" (Ecclesiasticus xxi, 2). Who acted like that?—Putiphar's wife wanted to rob Joseph of his innocence. But he noticed it at once and thought to himself: Thou false, poisonous serpent, thou desirest to seduce me!—and he ran away. That was right; that is what God wills.

2. Whoever does not flee from the danger to sin, will fall into sin. You know that from the Bible History.—David was a pious man. But he loved the danger to sin and fell deeply. Solomon was the wisest of all kings. But he kept company with pagan women and fell into detestable idolatry. Whoever does not avoid the occasion to sin, is like a person, who sweeps away the cobwebs, but does not kill the spider. What will happen?—Just listen to what the dear Saviour once said: "If thy eye scandalize thee, pluck it out. It is better for thee with one eye to enter into the kingdom of heaven, than having two eyes to be cast into the Hell of fire" (Mark ix, 46). But may a person pluck out his eye? The Saviour means something entirely different. Just tell me: Would you give your eye for a hundred thousand dollars?—See, your eye is dearer to you than all money. That is what Jesus means. Even though a companion, a book, a play, be as precious and dear to you as your eye, if it is for you

a danger to sin, away with it!—otherwise it will cost you eternal life.

Now reflect a little, as to whether you are still in the danger to sin! Have you perhaps also such a bad companion, who always seduces you to curse, to steal, to tell lies, to do impure things? What are you willing to do? Resolve earnestly: From this day forward I will not go with that companion anymore! Let us now renew our good resolution: "That I am resolved to do—I must get to Heaven, cost what it may, for nothing is too much for Heaven!"

LESSON XXIX.

Means of Amendment—Satisfaction.

(Supplementary)

Catechetical Unit:

What must he be determined to do, who forms a firm and sincere resolution of amendment? (second half: Deharbe).

Preparation. Dear children, once a boy went to a circus. Among the wild beasts there was a great, strong lion shut up in a cage, with iron bars in front of it. Somebody told the boy not to go too near the lion's cage, but to keep away lest the lion get hold of him. The boy took no notice of what was said to him. He went close to the cage. When the lion saw the boy standing close to the cage, he put his great, large paw through the bars. He took hold of the boy's arm, and tore it away from his body. The boy screamed out frightfully. But it was too late, his arm was gone.—Why did the boy lose his arm? Because he did not keep away from the lion. Why do people commit sin and lose their soul? Because they do not keep away from the near occasions, and danger, to sin. We learned of that in the last class. Let us review it.

(Question the pupils briefly on the preceding lesson.) —But we are not yet entirely finished with the good resolution of amendment. To avoid sin and the danger to sin is not yet enough.

Aim. *The penitent must also be prepared to satisfy, as far as possible, for his sin.* We shall learn of that today.—Just listen! I am going to tell you about a great sacrifice a certain sinner made in order to obtain absolution from God and the priest.

Presentation. Several years ago a great sinner went to Confession. He was a very wealthy man, a millionaire. But he did not get his wealth in an honorable manner. He had amassed nearly all his riches by stealing and fraud. No one knew anything about it. However, the sinner no longer had a single hour of peace. That sinful money burned into his soul like a glowing red-hot iron. Finally he determined to confess all. Therefore he went to his confessor and said openly: "I have much unjust money. Now it no longer allows me any peace of soul. But I want peace of soul again at any price." Then the priest said: "My friend! go home and count all carefully, just how much unjust money you have; then come to me again! for every unjust penny must be returned, otherwise there is no pardon either in this life or in the other life."

With a heavy heart the sinner went home and began to reckon. He needed several days for the work. Finally it was done. Immediately the next morning he came to the priest again and confessed all sincerely. He was in holy earnestness. For he actually gave to the confessor the whole sum of unjust money. It was an immense sum—more than a million dollars. And then he said: "Father! take this money; it is all the property of another. Give it back to the rightful owners." The priest took the money and did as he had been asked. The rich man became almost a beggar. But instead he obtained holy absolution—and that is worth more than all the treasure of earth.

Explanation.

(N. B. The following first two points are merely a repetition and may be omitted, if the catechist is pressed for time.)

1. This man was rich and yet so poor. Why?—Because he had many sins on his conscience. But one sin weighed upon his heart like a heavy stone—the theft. He could not bear it any longer. Therefore he went to Confession. It was a hard step to take, but it was his good fortune that he did it. Now tell me: What did he have to resolve to do?—Never again will I take a penny, rather go begging than steal again! Never another mortal sin at any cost! He was in perfect earnestness about that too; for shortly afterwards he proved it. He restored the ill-gotten goods.—*The sinner must be determined to avoid, at least, all mortal sins. (Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

2. An old proverb says: "The occasion makes the thief!" The man of our story had been an official and had charge of the public treasury. If he had remained in his position, how easily he could have fallen back into his old sins! What, therefore, did he resolve to do?—I will avoid the occasion of sin, and give up my position.—*The sinner must be determined to shun the danger, and especially the near occasion, of sin. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. Just consider: Why did that man become a thief? —His heart was possessed by the devil of money; he wanted to have more and more and to become richer and richer. The money was dearer to him than the Lord and dearer to him than Heaven and his own poor soul. This poisonous root must come out of the heart. But how?—What must a sick person do, if he wishes to get well?—He must make use of the remedies, that the doctor prescribes. The doctor of the soul also prescribes remedies to the sinner, so that he may get better. If the sinner is unwilling to make use of these means, that is a sign that he has not a firm and serious

purpose of amendment.—What remedies will the confessor have to give to his penitent?—In time of temptation think of God, Who sees and knows all! Think of death! You cannot take a single penny with you. Begin again to pray fervently, then you will not fall back again into sin! Thus the confessor must have spoken to the man of our story. And what did the penitent promise?—Yes, I will gladly do all that!—*The sinner must be determined to make good use of all the necessary means of amendment. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

4. Now if the sinner had died after Confession, would he have gone straight to Heaven?—Oh, no; I believe that he would have had to suffer a long time in Purgatory. For Confession alone is not enough; the sinner must also do more, that in God's sight it may be enough. He must punish himself for his sins. Then God is satisfied. In other words: The sinner must make due satisfaction for his sins. Therefore the confessor also prescribed a penance for the sinner. What penance?—I do not know. But for serious sins a serious penance is necessary. What then did the sinner have to resolve to do?—I will gladly accept and perform the penance, or satisfaction.—You see then: *the sinner must be determined to make due satisfaction for his sins. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

5. That is not yet all; now the important thing comes. What command did the confessor give to the penitent?—Yes, as long as an unjust penny is in the hands of the sinner, there is no complete pardon. But the man was prepared immediately to give back (restore) all the money, and thus to satisfy for the injury, or damage, done. Of course, that was hard for him, but he owed that.—*The sinner must be determined to repair whatever injury he may have done to his neighbor. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* It is better to live and die poor, than to live as a wealthy

man and some day to die in bitterness as a beggar, and to become poor in the other life. You remember from your Bible History what Zachaeus said: "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wronged anyone, I restore to him fourfold" (Luke xix, 8).

Write on the blackboard:

The sinner must:

1. avoid mortal sin and the near occasion of sin;
2. make use of the means of amendment;
3. make due satisfaction for his sins;
4. repair the injury done his neighbor.

Synthesis. Now we have gathered together all that is required for a firm resolution of amendment. Let us repeat once more. What did this man in mortal sin resolve to do?—What must he be determined to do, who has a firm resolve of sinning no more?—*(Have the pupils repeat the answers together from the Catechism and the blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. A peaceful conscience is worth more than all the money of the world; thus did the sinner of our story think to himself. Therefore he was determined to make satisfaction for all the injury he had done. Every penitent must be prepared to do the same thing. St. Augustine says: "Sin will not be pardoned, unless the ill-gotten goods be restored." Just reflect: Have you nothing to satisfy for?—

2. A boy has stolen several dollars from his neighbor. But the money will not allow him any peace of mind; it presses upon his conscience. Now he wants to confess. What must he first resolve to do?—Restore all immediately! For that money is sinful money. But what if he is unable to do it at once?—

Then meanwhile the good will to restore it as soon as possible is enough.—Another out of malice has broken a window. What must he do?—Pay today, or beg the neighbor to forgive the injury! If the damage is only slight, the Confession is indeed valid, but the sin is not forgiven.—A pupil has allowed a companion to seduce him to steal. What must those two resolve to do?—Both of them must satisfy for the injury they did, and the boy, who has been led astray may not keep company any longer with his tempter.—A child has taught another to do shameful things. What sort of a resolution must such a child make?—I am going to tell him: Do not do such things any more! Then I am going to pray for that child too.—Another child told lies about one of its schoolmates; and he was punished for it unjustly.—He must resolve: I am going to recall the detestable slander.—A penitent often missed Holy Mass. He confesses his sin very sincerely. He resolves: Now I am going to church every Sunday, as long as school lasts; but I will not go during the vacation. What do you say to that?—The penitent has not any sorrow and a firm resolution of amendment; he ought to remain away from Confession, then at least he will have one sin less on his conscience.

You surely do not want to do like that. No, you all want to do the right thing, as God wills. Therefore let us now excite ourselves to an act of contrition and a firm resolution of amendment:

"O my God! I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins, because I dread the loss of Heaven and the pains of Hell; but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, Who are all-good and deserving of my love. I firmly resolve with the help of Thy grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, to avoid the near occasions of sin, and to amend my life. Amen."

LESSON XXX.

Confess All!

Catechetical Unit:

1) What is Confession? L. XIX, Q. 208.

2) What sins are we bound to confess? L. XIX, Q. 209.

3) When is our Confession entire? L. XIX, Q. 213.

4) What should we do, if we cannot remember the number of our sins? L. XIX, Q. 214.

5) Is our Confession worthy, if without our fault we forget to confess a mortal sin? L. XIX, Q. 215.

Preparation. Dear children, on a certain occasion while Saul was still a persecutor of the Christians, he was riding on the road to Damascus, in order to imprison the Christians. Suddenly a heavenly light blinded him and Jesus appeared. As though struck by lightning Saul fell from his horse. In fear and terror he cried out: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me do?" Jesus replied: "Arise, and go into the city. There all will be told thee, what thou are to do." In Holy Confession too we are told everything that we must do, in order to lead a better life. We must resolve to make use of these means of amendment. Let us review this teaching. *(Question the pupils on the preceding lesson.)*—Think again of the prodigal son! He acknowledged with sorrowful heart all his wickedness to his father. How did he say that?—Do you see? To confess means to acknowledge with contrition the sins we have committed. The penitent—as you already know—must acknowledge his sins with true contrition to the confessor (the priest); then the priest, the confessor, forgives the sins in the name of God. But ordinarily only a priest who has been appointed by the Bishop, or as we also say, "who has been duly authorized by the Bishop," may validly hear our Confession and absolve us. But in danger of death

any priest may validly absolve us. Our Catechism says: **Confession is the telling of our sins to a duly authorized priest, for the purpose of obtaining forgiveness.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

Aim. You have already learned how to confess and have practiced it. But I must tell you now more in detail: *What sins you must confess and what sins you ought to confess.*—Many a poor sinner allows himself to be seduced by the devil and confesses badly and remains in his sins. A remarkable story, which contains a good lesson, is told by St. Bernard.

Presentation. Once there were many people in church—men and women and children. Devoutly they were standing near the confessional, in order to prepare their hearts; for they wanted to confess. There was a Saint, too, in the house of God. Now suddenly he saw the devil passing busily to and fro from penitent to penitent. A boy was about to begin his Confession. Quickly the devil hastened up to him and whispered something into his ear. To the other side of the confessional there stood a big, old sinner. He had confessed often, but never had he earnestly tried to amend his life. The devil was soon finished with him. Next to this sinful man was a young man. Already he was a little impatient, because he had to wait so long. The tempter noticed that, and immediately he began to speak earnestly with that young person, as though he wanted to persuade him to do something. In the beginning the young man did not want to listen to it; but finally he gave in. Filled with malicious joy the devil went away and murmured to himself: "He is mine!" There was an old woman, too, sitting there in the pew. She did not have very much on her heart, only a few venial sins. But she wanted to receive Holy Communion, Oh! so very much. For then she is so very happy, when she has the dear Saviour again in her heart. There too the devil tried his luck. But

all his arts were in vain and he left her crestfallen and went on to others.

All astonished the Saint had been watching that for a while. At last he took courage and asked earnestly and firmly: "What is your business here in the church?" The devil was somewhat frightened; but then he replied: "I am giving back what I have stolen." "Is that so? What have you stolen?" The devil did not want to come out with the answer. But finally he admitted it. "I am giving back shame. I have taken shame away from the sinner, but after the sin, I give it back again." Now the Saint knew enough.—Do you also know what he meant to say?

Explanation. Yes, thus does the devil act. Before the sin is committed, he takes shame away from the sinner, so that he may not be ashamed to commit the sin. But after the sin he gives the sinner his shame gack again, so that he may be ashamed to confess his sin. Oh, false shame! Now let us look at these four penitents.

1. The first penitent was a boy. Hitherto he had been very good. But a wicked companion had seduced him to commit a detestable sin. Of course, the boy felt sorry for his sin at once, and immediately he thought: I must confess that sin. For a long while he had been fearing to confess it. Now the tempter came and did not allow him any more peace; he even followed him into the confessional. What do you suppose he said to that penitent?—What! you want to confess that. How ashamed you must feel! What will the priest think of you! Just tell the other sins; that is enough. Do you see? Now the devil gave back that shame again to the boy. — However, the Guardian Angel did not desert this child. He warned him, saying: "Just tell the sin! Then all will be made right again. God will forgive you." And—thanks be to God!—the boy told it openly and sincerely. To sin

is a disgrace, but to confess is not a disgrace. Yes, that is the right thing to do.—Our Catechism says: **We are bound to confess all our mortal sins.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* That is necessary, if our Confession is to be complete, or entire. Whoever repents of all his sins, except *one* mortal sin, is and remains in mortal sin. Whoever resolves to avoid all except only *one* mortal sin, is and remains in mortal sin. Whoever confesses all but *one* mortal sin, is and remains in mortal sin.

2. With the first penitent, therefore, the devil did not have any luck. With the second, however, he fared better. This man was a scape-goat. This time he again had a great many sins to confess, many mortal sins. What do you suppose the devil whispered into his heart?—Oh, you do not have to be so strict and so exact; a few mortal sins more or less do not matter much. If you tell all, you will not get absolution! Now what does the sinner do? This is how he confesses: "I missed the services a few times on Sunday." The confessor thinks, of course, that he means only twice or three times. But that is not true; it happened ten times since his last Confession. How ought he to have confessed?—Then again the sinner had harmed the good name of his neighbor by telling lies against him. Now he confesses: "I used bad talk." Is that right?—No, because he did not tell the kind of sin, he committed; for to talk bad might mean to speak impure language, or to be uncharitable. The sinner did not make that clear to the confessor. Our Catechism says: **Our Confession is entire, when we tell the number and the kinds of our sins.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Therefore we must tell the number and the kinds of sins we have committed; otherwise our Confession is invalid.

3. Now listen further to how he confesses! "I was drunk several times." That again is not true; for he was drunk nearly every Sunday. "A few times, too, I used filthy talk." That is a real lie; for it happened nearly every day. What do you say of such a Confession?—That sinner takes with him from the confessional all his sins and besides he also commits another mortal sin. How was he bound to have made his Confession?—But suppose, that he no longer knew exactly, how often he committed those sins?—Our Catechism tells us: **If we cannot remember the number of our sins, we should tell the number as nearly as possible, and say how often we may have sinned in a day, a week, or a month, and how long the habit or practice has lasted.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* That is nothing new to you, for you have already heard of that in the lesson on the examination of conscience.

4. Who was the third penitent of our story?—What did that young man have on his conscience? He was a rough fellow. Once his mother had given him some good advice. But at once he became very angry and said to his mother, in a very saucy manner: "I know myself what I must do!" Yes, he was so impudent and scolded in the most shameful manner and even cursed her. Now he goes to Confession and says: "I insulted somebody." The Confessor, of course, thinks that he refers to a companion of his. That would not have been such a serious fault. But to insult one's mother and even to curse her, that is an entirely different kind of a sin and is a mortal sin. That is an important circumstance, which attaches to the sin and changes the character of the sin. That makes the nature of the sin much worse. The sinner ought to have told the confessor that expressly.—**Our Confession is entire, when we tell the circumstances, which change the nature of the sin.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard inserting the words under No. 2.)*

The sinner has one more sin on his conscience: he has stolen a hundred dollars from his employer. But in Confession he only says: "I stole once." If it had been only a few pennies, it would have been only a little sin; but to steal a hundred dollars is a mortal sin. That again is an important circumstance, which makes the sin worse. Therefore he ought to have mentioned that in Confession. Indeed I am ready to believe, that the devil was filled with joy over this bad Confession. The young man confessed invalidly, because he did not tell *the necessary circumstances of his sins.*

5. What did the devil accomplish with the old woman of our story?—There all his efforts were in vain. She had only little faults and she wanted to confess them all. To confess everything is indeed the best thing to do; but there is no strict "must" about it. Confession would be valid without that. Remember then: We are not, indeed, bound to confess venial sins; but **it is well also to confess our venial sins.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

How else can you get rid of venial sins?—But contrition of holy love (perfect contrition) is not so easy after all; a pious Christian disposition is necessary for that. And then again frequently the penitent does not know, whether a sin is mortal or venial. Even the confessor cannot always distinguish exactly. Oftentimes only God knows it. Therefore the penitent ought to do what the old mother of our story did, and confess all his venial sins. That is the surest way.

6. Now one more thing. Let us suppose that among the penitents that went to Confession on that occasion, there was a girl, that confessed all her sins, as far as she knew. But after her Confession she remembers: "Oh! I left out a mortal sin. I missed Holy Mass through my own fault on a holyday of obligation." Now she is all excited and full of fear. But let me ask: "Child! why did you not confess that sin?" "Oh! I did not think of it until after Confession." Is her

Confession valid?—Do not be disturbed! You are without guilt. The good God has forgiven you all your sins. But, what should that child do?—She should tell that sin to the confessor the next time she confesses, and all will be right.—**If without our fault we forget to confess a mortal sin, our Confession is worthy, and the sin is forgiven; but it must be told in Confession if it again comes to our mind.**

(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)

Write on the blackboard:

1. Confession—telling our sins to a duly authorized priest—to obtain pardon.
2. Confess: a) All mortal sins;
   b) the necessary circumstances, which change the nature of the sin.
3. Such a Confession is entire (number—circumstances).
4. We are not bound to confess venial sins—but it is well to confess them.
5. Sins not confessed without our fault—forgiven —tell them in next Confession!

Synthesis. Now you know all that is required to make our Confession entire. Let us repeat: What is Confession?—What do you mean by a duly authorized priest?—What sins are we bound to confess?—What circumstances must we tell in Confession?—Must we tell venial sins too?—What should we do, if we forget a mortal sin in Confession? — Is such a Confession worthy?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. A few more examples! A woman confessed: "I sinned in thought, word and deed. I am sorry for these sins. Now I have finished." How do you like this Confession?—That is no Confession at all. A sinner has accused himself thus: "I sinned

against the first Commandment, against the second Commandment."—The confessor does not know anything as yet. In every Commandment there are many sins, big and small.—A pupil says: "I missed Holy Mass five or ten times."—That child ought to reflect more and confess better.—A penitent has forgotten a mortal sin; later on he thinks of that sin. Then he gets afraid.—Another omits several venial sins. At once he fears, that the whole Confession is invalid. Is that true?—A bad boy did impure things before other children. How must he confess that sin?—A child wants to do the right thing and tells the number of all his venial sins. It that necessary?—When confessing the more important venial sins, the penitent might say: "sometimes, often, nearly every day"; that is enough. —A child says in regard to the fourth Commandment: "I did not mind my mother three hundred times." That is awkward. How could it confess better?—

2. We saw four penitents today. Which of those do you want to imitate?—Be conscientious like the little boy and the old mother! Confess all your sins, great and small! And if the devil whispers anything wrong into your ears, answer him boldly: "Away, tempter! I will not allow myself to be deceived and lied to!"

LESSON XXXI.

Confess Humbly and Sincerely.

Catechetical Unit:

1) When is our Confession humble? L. XIX, Q. 211.

2) When is our Confession sincere? L. XIX, Q. 212.

3) Is it not a grievous offense wilfully to conceal a mortal sin in Confession? L. XIX, Q. 216.

4) What must he do who has wilfully concealed a mortal sin in Confession? L. XIX, Q. 217.

5) What should the penitent consider, if he is ashamed to make a sincere Confession? (Deharbe)

6) Which are the chief qualities of a good Confession? L. XIX, Q. 210.

Preparation. Dear children, let us first review the teaching of our last lesson. *(Question the pupils briefly on the foregoing lesson.)*—To confess all mortal sins and the circumstances, which change the nature of the sin, is a matter of conscience. You ought also to make it a matter of conscience to tell all your venial sins. However, there are many sinners, who do not tell all; they are not sincere and are lost forever.

Aim. Today I must give you a serious instruction in regard to that matter. *Be humble and sincere in your Confessions!*

Presentation. St. Antoninus tells us a touching story. A daughter of a good, Christian family lived for a long time piously and modestly. But the truth remains: "Whoever loves the danger, will perish in the danger." She did not avoid the dangerous occasion of sin and lost her innocence. Thereby she was deprived of her life's happiness.

At once her conscience began to distrub her and she went to Confession. However, she did not dare to tell her sin, but rather concealed it out of false shame. Henceforth she did not have a single hour of peace any more. She confessed again and again and each time the devil whispered into her heart: "Do not tell it! You would have to be ashamed to death." And unfortunately she listened to the voice of the tempter. That poor soul could not endure it any longer; she wanted to be freed from the sin at any cost. Consequently she made this resolution: I am going to leave the world and enter a convent.

So it happened—she became a nun. She made a Confession of her whole life, told even that detestable

sin, but in such a timid and confused manner, that the confessor could not understand the sin. Henceforth she led outwardly a model life, but interiorly she did not find any peace. Soon afterwards the poor woman feel into a deadly sickness and received the Last Sacraments. Again she took courage: "At the moment of death I am going to tell all to the confessor!" But when the time was at hand, she concealed for the last time that same sin. The death agony began, soon she lost consciousness and died in her sins. No one had any inkling of it. Her sisters in religion prayed for the repose of her soul. But see, God allowed the unhappy woman to appear to the sisters at prayer. She was horrible to look at and cried out in despair: "Cease praying for me! I am damned, because in my youth I concealed a sin in Confession." She had postponed her penance, and postponed it; she had concealed her sin—and the sinner was lost.

Explanation. 1. To be unhappy for time and for eternity, how sad! Who is to blame for that?—In the first place the poor sinner was proud. Scarcely had she committed the sin, when she went to Confession. That was perfectly right. But to conceal the sin, that was all wrong. She was not too proud to commit the sin, why should she be too proud now to confess it? What ought the penitent to have thought to herself, when kneeling before the priest?—What an awful sin I have committed against God! Surely I deserve Hell-fire. How then can I feel proud? She ought to have thought of the prodigal son, who knelt before his father and said in all humility: "Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee!" Then she could have told her sins as God demands—with true humility of heart. Our Catechism says: **Our Confession is humble, when we accuse ourselves of our sins with a deep sense of shame and sorrow for having offended God.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)* St.

Peter tells us: "God resisteth the proud, but to the humble He giveth grace" (I Pet. v, 5).

2 a) What else ought that poor sinner to have thought to herself?—I am kneeling not before a man, but before God Himself, not before the confessor, but before my Father in Heaven. God knows all; He knows my guilt. God's eyes pierce my heart; His eyes are brighter than the sun's rays. I cannot hide or conceal anything from God. Therefore I will tell all just as I know I am guilty before God. Yes, then her Confession would have been what God demands —a sincere Confession. **Our Confession is sincere, when we tell our sins honestly and truthfully.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* The Holy Ghost Himself says in the Scriptures: "The deceitful man the Lord will abhor" (Ps. v, 7); and again: "Come not to the Lord with a double heart" (Ecclesiasticus i, 36).

b) However, the sinner allowed her heart to be blinded by the devil, and she concealed her detestable sin. But to conceal a sin, that is not a sincere Confession. And just as she did the first time, so she did each time she went to Confession. Only once did that unhappy woman want to tell her sin—when she made a general Confession of her whole life. But this Confession also was worthless in God's sight; why?—The penitent did not tell her sin openly and clearly, and the confessor did not understand what she meant to say. The sinner, of course, tried to excuse herself; she hung, as it were, a veil or a beautiful mantel over her sins, so that they would not seem so bad. But to make one's sins appear better than they are, is not to make a sincere Confession.—Some people go to the other extreme—they make their sins appear much worse than they really are — they exaggerate them. That too is untruthful, insincere.—**Our Confession is sincere, when we tell our sins honestly and truthfully, neither exaggerating nor excusing them.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. How foolish of that sinner to conceal that sin! God did not forgive any of her sins; on the contrary, she left the Confession each time with all her sins and with one more mortal sin, because she misused a holy thing—the Sacrament of Penance. She told a lie each time to the Holy Ghost and made her Confessions worthless. **It is a grievous offense wilfully to conceal a mortal sin in Confession, because we thereby tell a lie to the Holy Ghost, and make our Confession useless.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

4. How could she be helped in her misery?—She must tell all her sins again in Confession and must say in addition: I have been making many bad Confessions! Then her confessor would have gladly helped her to make a good Confession. He would have told her to confess all her sins, since her last worthy Confession. All that she would have had to do, would have been to answer his questions truthfully and sincerely. In other words; she would have to recall all her mortal sins, the number and the kinds with the necessary circumstances, since her last good Confession, that is, she concealed that sin in Confession. Such a Confession is called a General Confession. Remember then: **He who wilfully conceals a mortal sin in Confession must not only confess it, but must also repeat all the sins he has committed since his last worthy Confession.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* There is no other way to obtain God's pardon.

5. But why do you suppose that sinner concealed her sin?—Perhaps for fear that her disgraceful guilt might become known?—No, nothing can be published outside of the confessional. Why? You know, that sometimes we seal a letter, so that it is impossible to open it and read what is in it. Thus, too, did the good God seal the lips of the confessor. The priest may not speak a single word about what he hears in Confession, even though he were to receive a kingdom for it.

This duty is called the **seal of Confession.** Yes, he must prefer to give up his life rather than reveal anything. And as a matter of fact, that has happened often. —(Once there was in Bohemia a cruel king. He would have liked very much to know what his queen had confessed. Therefore he called her confessor, St. John Nepomucene, and asked: "Now tell me, what do you know about the queen?" But John did not tell him a single word. The king began to threaten;—but all was useles. He ordered that the Saint be tortured on his naked body with burning torches—all in vain. The Saint only sighed: "O Jesus, O Mary!" Then the king spoke the sentence of death. John was thrown into the Mildaw River, that flowed through the city. There St. John found his death—the heroic death of a martyr of the seal of Confession). — Do you see? Thus must every confessor remain silent, silent like a dead marble statue. The sins are buried in his heart and cannot ever come out again. Yes, *if the penitent is ashamed to make a sincere Confession, he ought to consider that he is confessing his sins to a priest, who is bound to secrecy. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* If the sinner would remember that, he would not be insincere.

6. Just reflect: What did the poor sinner of our story have from concealing her sins? She never felt happy at heart; she had no peaceful hour any more on earth. She left all and entered a convent. Did she find peace there? No, continually the worm of a bad conscience gnawed at her heart. When she arose in the morning a voice called out to her: Sinner! you have confessed invalidly. When all tired out she lay down in the evening, she again heard the voice: Sinner! God will judge you and punish you. When others were happy, she was sad. Nowhere did she find peace. Surely that was a miserable, restless life! And why all that? Because she was not sincere in her Confessions. Which is better, to confess sincerely, or *to live*

always uneasy in mind? (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)

7. For every sinner there comes finally the hour of death. How was the death of the sinner of our story? —Only with trembling can one think of it. Once more she heard the voice of God's grace: Tell it all! It is high time! But what happened? Again the devil closed her lips. As she lived, so she died in her sins. How terrible must not have been the last hours of the poor sinner! Would one of you like to die like that? Which is better, to confess sincerely, or *to die unhappy forever? (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

8. Where is that poor soul now?—She told us herself: "Cease praying for me! I am damned." Horrible! She is buried and is burning in the sea of fire in Hell. But is her sin buried also? No, that will be brought to light—on the last day. For then that sin will become visible like an indelible mark of shame on the body and on the soul of the sinner. Thus must the unfortunate woman appear before the Judge, Jesus Christ, and before all the Angels and men. What a shame and disgrace! Then she will cry out for fear and despair: "If only I had confessed that sin! Ye mountains, fall upon me, ye hills, cover me!" But all in vain, it is too late.—Which is better, to confess sincerely, or *to be put to shame on the last day before the whole world? (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* How foolish to conceal a mortal sin!

Write on the blackboard:

1. Confess humbly—with shame and sorrow for having offended God.
2. Confess sincerely—honestly and truthfully—neither exaggerating nor excusing the sin.
3. To wilfully conceal a mortal sin in Confession —mortal sin—lie to the Holy Ghost—makes Confession worthless.

4. Insincere Confession—made good by repeating sin and all sins since last worthy Confession.

5. Confess sincerely!—a) Confessor bound to secrecy;
   b) makes life happy;
   c) makes dying easy;
   d) avoids shame on last day.

Synthesis. Do you some day want to become as unhappy as this sinner? No, a thousand times rather confess all sincerely and humbly. Therefore remember well what I have taught you today. When is our Confession humble?—When is it sincere?—What ought the penitent to think, when he kneels before the confessor?—What ought the penitent to think, when he is ashamed to confess sincerely?—What is the duty called, which obliges the confessor to keep silent about what he hears in Confession?—What are the chief qualities of a good Confession?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. Children, all of you undoubtedly want to confess humbly and sincerely. Therefore do not conceal anything! Why do you go to Confession? In order that the heavenly Father may be reconciled with you again, is not that so? But can the heavenly Father be reconciled with you and forgive you, if you are false and insincere? Do you know what such a penitent does? He lies to the Holy Ghost. For Jesus said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost!" What a sin! Therefore do not conceal anything! It is better not to confess at all than to confess badly. Do not be ashamed! To commit sin is a disgrace; but to confess sin is not a disgrace. Only do not say: What will the confessor think of me? I can tell you that now.—Thanks be to God, that this penitent is confessing all humbly and sincerely!

2. Do not conceal anything; but neither excuse yourselves! Just listen to what St. Augustine once said: "If you accuse yourselves, God will excuse you; if you excuse yourselves, God will accuse you!" Do you understand what he means?—If you confess sincerely, without exaggerating or excusing anything, God will say: You are free from all guilt! But if you try to excuse your guilt, God will say: You are still in your guilt! Which do you want? Be sensible and tell everything openly and sincerely, otherwise your poor soul will not have any peace. Either confess now or burn some day!

LESSON XXXII.

The Rite of Confession

Catechetical Unit:

1) What should we do on entering the confessional? L. XX, Q. 224.

2) Which are the first things we should tell the priest in Confession? L. XX, Q. 225.

3) After telling the time of our last Confession and Communion, what should we do? L. XX, Q. 226.

4) What must we do when the confessor asks us questions? L. XX, Q. 227.

5) What should we do after telling our sins? L. XX, Q. 228.

6) How should we end our Confession? L. XX, Q. 229.

7) What should we do while the priest is giving us absolution? L. XX, Q. 230.

(N. B. Have the pupils make use of our leaflet entitled: *"A Method of Confession."*)

Preparation. Dear children, God will not forgive us our sins, unless we confess all our mortal sins humbly

and sincerely. We may not wilfully conceal any serious sin. Let us review this teaching. *(Question the pupils briefly on the preceding lesson.)*—The prodigal son knelt down before his father and confessed: "Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee. I am not now worthy to be called thy son." But the father embraced his son with joy and kissed him and forgave him all.—In very much the same way as the prodigal son the penitent must act. You all have made your Confession time and again. I wonder whether you are doing everything as you should?—

Aim. I shall now tell you more exactly how you ought to confess. *What must the penitent do? What does the confessor do?*

Presentation. The penitent kneels down before his heavenly Father and before the confessor. First the priest gives the blessing for Confession. While giving it he says: "May the Lord be in thy heart and on thy lips, that thou mayest rightly confess thy sins; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." During the recitation of this blessing, the penitent makes the sign of the Cross devoutly over himself (blessing himself). Then he begins at once, saying: "Bless me, Father. I confess to Almighty God and to you, Father, that I have sinned. My last Confession was made.....ago; since then I have committed the following sins." And now the Confession begins at once. The sinner tells all his sins humbly and sincerely, just as he has already memorized them during the examination of conscience. After this has been done, the penitent ends the Confession with the words: "I also accuse myself of all the sins of my past life, especially of—(disobedience, for example). For these and all my other sins I am heartily sorry. Pray Father, give me a penance and absolution."

When the penitent has finished, the confessor begins. First he asks the penitent a few questions, if that is necessary. The penitent should answer sincerely. Then follows a short instruction. The penitent ought to pay strict attention to what is said. Finally the priest gives the sinner a penance to perform. But the penitent must not leave the confessional yet; for the principal thing is still to come—holy absolution. The words of absolution are: "May our Lord Jesus Christ absolve thee, and I by His authority absolve thee from every bond of excommunication and interdict, in as far as I am able and thou needest. Then *I absolve thee from thy sins* in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." During the last words the confessor makes the sign of the Cross over the penitent, and the penitent should bless himself. Another little prayer is added: "May the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the merits of the Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, and of all the Saints,—may whatever good thou dost and whatever evil thou endurest, be for thee unto the remission of sins, the increase of grace and a reward unto eternal life. Amen." Thereupon the confessor dismisses the penitent with the Catholic greeting: "God bless you!" The penitent should answer: "Praise be Jesus Christ. Thank you, Father!" Now the Confession is over.—Let us try to remember the chief points!

Explanation. 1. What is the first thing the penitent does and says on entering the confessional?—**On entering the confessional we should kneel, make the sign of the Cross, and say to the priest: "Bless me, Father."** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)* A good Confession is a great blessing. To make a good Confession we need help from above. Therefore the priest first of all gives the blessing for Confession. What words does he say? —"May the Lord be in thy heart and on thy lips!" The meaning is: May God's grace be in thy heart, so that thou mayest know all thy sins rightly; and may God's

blessing be in thy mouth, so that thou mayest confess sincerely. What should the penitent do during the blessing?—He should make the sign of the Cross quietly over himself; but let it be a devout sign of the Cross! He ought to think to himself at the same time: The good God is watching me and my Holy Guardian Angel also.

2. Now the penitent begins. What words does he say?—**I confess to Almighty God and to you Father, that I have sinned.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* That makes one feel a little ashamed and humiliated indeed; but it is true none the less. For in God's sight we all are only poor sinners. And just because it is true, the penitent ought to say it openly and with all his heart.—Before whom does the sinner accuse himself?—The confessor is indeed only a man. But he has a high dignity; for he is taking the place of God. The penitent should not forget that, and therefore he ought to be modest.—Do you also know, why the penitent kneels down before the confessor? —By the very fact of kneeling down he says to God and the confessor: I am a poor sinner! Of course, kneeling down is not absolutely necessary. Children, therefore, who are too small, ought to remain standing during the Confession. The good Lord knows, of course, whether the sinner is humble and contrite of heart; for He sees into the heart.

3. What is the next thing the penitent tells the priest?—Our Catechism says: **The first things we should tell the priest in Confession are the time of our last Confession, and whether we said the penance and went to Holy Communion.** *(Repeat together.)* Tell me: How would you say that?—Strictly speaking, it is not necessary to tell whether you have said the penance and gone to Holy Communion. If you have omitted to say the penance through your own fault, you must, of course, accuse yourself of that. Otherwise, however, you may omit mentioning that. The same is true of Holy Communion.

4. Now follows the Confession of your sins. You must tell all your mortal sins, which you have committed since your last worthy Confession. You may also mention any venial sins you are especially sorry for. Our Catechism says: **After telling the time of our last Confession and Communion, we should confess all the mortal sins we have since committed, and all the venial sins we may wish to mention.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* Remember, that while confessing you should keep your hands folded like this *(illustrate)*, but not before your mouth. The penitent may not speak to one side, but he ought to speak directly before himself to the priest through the screen, so that the confessor may be able to understand all. Therefore the penitent ought not to speak too slowly and not too fast, not carelessly and not timidly, not too loudly and not too quietly. If the penitent should happen to forget a sin, he should continue his Confession quietly; he ought not to get excited. He may tell that sin at the end of the Confession; or if he forgets it entirely, he may tell that in the next Confession.—When the penitent has finished telling his sins, what should he do?—He should accuse himself again of all the sins of his past life in a general way, and then he may add one or several sins, for which he is especially sorry, but which he has already confessed. You know that if some one has insulted you, you may forgive that insult once, twice, three, or a hundred times, if you like. In like manner you may accuse yourself again and again of your past sins, which have already been forgiven, and you may beg God to forgive them again and again. **We should end our Confession by saying: I also accuse myself of all the sins of my past life, telling if we choose one or several of our past sins.** *(Repeat together.)*

5. After the penitent has finished the confessor begins to speak. What should you do when the confessor asks a question?—Reflect a moment, then answer him sincerely, just as though the dear Lord Himself were asking the question.—**When the confes-**

sor asks us questions, we should answer them truthfully and sincerely. *(Repeat together.)* Be sure and do not try to excuse yourself! You cannot make the sin appear better in God's sight; for He knows all. If perchance the penitent has not understood the confessor properly, let him say to the confessor modestly: "Please, Father, I did not understand the question."

6. How ought you to conduct yourself during the instruction which the confessor may see fit to give? —Listen attentively to every word and preserve it all in your heart. You might think to yourself what young Tobias said to his father: "Yes, father, I will do all that you have told me!" **After telling our sins we should listen with attention to the advice which the confessor may think proper to give.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* Perhaps at the end the confessor will ask: "Have you anything else to confess?" If you do not know any more to tell, answer: "No, Father, that is all that I remember." But if you still have something to say, say it openly and clearly! Do not be ashamed!

7. Finally the confessor gives you a *penance. (Use the blackboard.)* Why the penitent receives a penance you will understand in the next class. Pay attention, so that you may understand the penance rightly and remember it. If you have understood the confessor rightly, answer him: "Yes, Father," or "Thank you, Father." If you did not understand the penance, ask the confessor again modestly to repeat what he has said. Should you, perhaps, be unable to perform the penance, say: "Please, Father, I cannot say that." Be sure not to go out of the confessional without having received and understood the penance, for the penance belongs to the Sacrament of Penance.

8. May the penitent now stand up and leave the confessional? No, he has still sins upon his soul; he still needs the *holy absolution. (Use the blackboard.)* What are the words of absolution?—"I absolve thee

from thy sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." At these words the penitent should bless himself. He might at the same time imagine: Now I am kneeling at the feet of Jesus Christ; He Himself is absolving me from my sins. Review the act of contrition with all your heart during the absolution of the confessor.—Do you know what is taking place in the solemn moment of holy absolution?—The sinful soul is being washed pure in the Blood of Jesus Christ. The Holy Ghost comes and decorates the heart of the penitent with the precious garment of grace. But the heavenly Father embraces the penitent, kisses him and says with joy to His Angels: "Behold! this is my beloved child, in whom I am well pleased." **While the priest is giving us the absolution, we should from our heart renew the Act of Contrition.** *(Repeat together.)*

How does the confessor dismiss the penitent?—Only then may the penitent leave the confessional.

Write on the blackboard:

1. Blessing of the confessor;
2. Confession—prayer;
3. Confession of sins;
4. Instruction or advice of confessor;
5. Penance;
6. Holy absolution.

Synthesis. Now we have everything together that belongs to Confession. The priest gives the blessing. What beautiful words does he say? What does the penitent do at the same time?—How does he begin his Confession?—How should the penitent conduct himself during the instruction, which the confessor gives?—To what ought the penitent to pay attention especially?—How does the penitent end his Confession?—What are the words of holy absolution?—What ought the penitent to do during the absolution?—What hap-

pens during the absolution?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. The catechist will have the children repeat the order of the rite of Confession. Then he should have the children go through the ceremonial of Confession in a practical manner; to be sure with the necessary reserve, so that the dignity of the Sacrament may not be violated. He should also take the children to the church and show them how to approach and leave the confessional.

2. A chief point in confessing is this: Be humble! In Confession every one is a poor sinner, even though he be a mighty king. St. Louis was King of France. Once he went to Holy Confession. The priest said to him: "Your Majesty!" The Saint would not stand for that salutation, but said: "Now I am not king and you are not my subject. I am a penitent and you are the confessor!" Do you see? He was humble. The dear Lord surely was pleased with that and spoke the consoling words over the King: "Thy sins are forgiven thee! Go in peace!"

LESSON XXXIII.

Satisfaction or Penance.

Catechetical Unit:

1) What is the satisfaction in the Sacrament of Penance? (Deharbe)

2) Does the Sacrament of Penance remit all the punishment due to sin? L. XIX, Q. 219.

3) What is the temporal punishment due to our sins? (Deharbe)

4) Why does God require a temporal punishment for sin? L. XIX, Q. 220.

5) Why does the priest give us a penance after Confession? L. XIX, Q. 218.

6) In what does the penance imposed by the confessor consist? (Deharbe)

7) Is the Confession valid, if the penitent does not perform the penance enjoined? (Deharbe)

Preparation. Dear children, every Catholic child ought to know how to make its Confession properly. We learned that in our last class. Let us review it. *(Question the pupils briefly on the foregoing lesson.)* —Think again of the prodigal son! He was ready to work for his father as a servant: "Make me as one of thy hired servants!" But why work as a servant? —He knew very well: I did my father a great injustice; now I must also do penance for that.—That every sinner must do: do penance or satisfy after Confession. Therefore the penitent receives a penance from the Confessor; it is also called satisfaction. Therefore satisfaction is a penance from the confessor.—*Satisfaction in the Sacrament of Penance is the performance of penance enjoined by the confessor. (Repeat together; use the blackbord; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

Aim. I must show you that a little better: *Why the penitent receives a penance.* God Himself wants the sinner to do penance. Just think of King David! But let us first tell the story.

Presentation. David was a pious and God-fearing king. But even the just man can fall, if he is not on his guard. The king did not guard his eyes, and thus mortal sin entered into his heart through the eyes. David seduced the wife of Urias to be unfaithful and was also the cause, that Urias lost his life in battle. Then God sent the Prophet Nathan to David. He scolded the king very severely. In the name of God he said: "King, what hast thou done? God has seen thy sin. God's punishment will come upon thee!" When David heard these words, he took them very much to heart. He felt sorry for and wept over his

sins bitterly and confessed: "I have sinned against the Lord." Then he no longer ate nor drank anything and kept calling out continually to God for grace: "Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy. I know my iniquity and my sin is always before me. Cast me not away from Thy face! A contrite and humbled heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise" (Ps. 50).

And behold, God was merciful and pardoned the sinner his entire guilt. Again the Prophet Nathan came before the king and spoke in God's name: "The Lord also hath taken away thy sin: thou shalt not die; but thy child shall surely die." And so it happened. God's punishment soon came: David's youngest child had to die. Mourning and weeping the king cried out: "The hand of the Lord lies heavily on me."—But not yet enough of punishment. Another son also prepared untold sorrow for the father, the wicked Absolom. You yourselves know how he acted towards his father. For that reason he perished miserably. When the news of his death was brought to the king, his heart nearly broke with sorrow, and weeping he cried out: "O Absolom, my son, would to God, that I had died for thee!"

Explanation. 1. Whoever commits sin deserves punishment. Everyone knows that. If David had died in his sins, he would have been lost forever; for to mortal sin there attaches eternal death. However, the Prophet Nathan's threats of punishment struck him like a bolt of lightning; then sorrow for sin burned his soul. Thereupon the king confessed as well as he was able to confess; but God absolved him through the Prophet: "The Lord hath forgiven thee thy sin; thou shalt not die." But what did the Prophet add immediately?—"Thy son will surely die!" But tell me, how can God pardon sin and at the same time punish?—If mortal sin is forgiven, the punishment of death is also forgiven; but all the punishment is not yet forgiven. God forgave the king's sin and together with it also the eternal punishment due

to that sin; but he did not forgive him the temporal punishment. The same is true of the Sacrament of Penance.—**The Sacrament of Penance remits the eternal punishment due to sin, but it does not always remit the temporal punishment.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

2. What God threatened, that also happened.—Yes, there was no end any more to the king's sufferings. Life became for David like a real Purgatory. He would have preferred to die rather than to live. Do you see? That was a temporal punishment for sin. The king, however, bore it all patiently. That was well done. For the sinner must go to Purgatory either here on earth or over there in the other world. Better here than over there.—*Temporal punishment due to our sins is that punishment, which we have to suffer either here on earth, or in Purgatory. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* It is called temporal, because it lasts for a time only. Purgatory will cease at some time: here upon earth most certainly at death, over there in the other world most certainly on the last day.

3. a) Now you will also easily understand, why the penitent receives a penance.—By holy absolution the soul is made pure from sin, is freed from the eternal punishment, but not always from the temporal punishment due to sin. The sinner must himself do penance for that. Our Catechism says: *God requires a temporal punishment as a satisfaction for sin. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* Temporal punishment, which we perform in this life, takes the place of Purgatory. Which, do you think, is easier: to do penance or to burn in Purgatory?—

b) King David had to do penance for his sins. But, I believe, that the dear Lord had another intention, when He punished the king so severely.—God thought to Himself: I will chastise him, then he will see how wicked sin is! Do you see? God wanted to teach the

royal sinner the great wickedness of sin. Our Catechism says: **God requires temporal punishment to teach us the great evil of sin.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

c) Tell me: Do you suppose that David committed that sin again?—No indeed; he was disgusted with sin. So it is with regard to Confession. The penitent receives a penance as a punishment for his sins, but also to prevent him from sinning again and to better his life.—**God requires a temporal punishment to prevent us from falling again.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* Penance ought to be for the penitent a medicine. The doctor gives medicine to the sick person; why?—The sick person ought to get better. The sinner too is sick in his soul. Therefore the doctor of the soul, the confessor, gives him a medicine, a penance, in order that he may improve and not fall back again into the old sickness of the soul, sin.

4. The dear Lord is like a good father. If the child has done something bad, it is punished. That is perfectly right. The punishment ought to hurt the child and make it satisfy for the wicked conduct it was guilty of. The same is true of Confession. **The priest gives us a penance after Confession, that we may satisfy God for the temporal punishment due to our sins.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* But the father does not simply want to hurt the child; he also wants to do good to the child; he wants to help the child so that it will not fall back into its wicked conduct again. So, too, we receive a penance after Confession, not only to satisfy for the temporal punishment due to our sins, but also to teach us how wicked it is to sin and to keep us from falling back into sin.

5. The dear Lord has different kinds of penance. What penance did He give to the king?—Other sinners God permits to get sick or poor. The doctor, too, has various medicines. He gives to each patient the medicine, which he needs. Thus also the confessor acts. He gives to each penitent the penance, which he stands

in need of most of all. Here is a person, that curses. The confessor can impose upon him this penance: As often as you speak a curse word, pray: "Hallowed be Thy name!" or: "Praised and blessed be the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!" To an angry person he might give the penance: If anger arises within you, think of the patient Saviour bearing His cross and pray: "Crucified Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me!" What penance will the confessor impose upon an intemperate person? a drunkard?—Fasting is good for them. Upon a stingy person?—He ought to give alms.—*The penance given by the confessor consists of good works: prayer, fasting, almsgiving or other exercises pleasing to God. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* But generally the confessor gives prayers as penance, especially to children. For everybody can pray and prayer is good for all things.

Of course, now there are only small penances given, even for great sins. Formerly it was entirely different and much stricter. Just listen! For careless swearing a penitent had to fast for seven days on bread and water. A liar did not fare much better. Whoever insulted and cursed his parents, had to fast for forty days. For talking in the church there was a fast for ten days. If it were like that today, many children would never finish with their penance. Now it is much easier. The penitent ought, therefore, to perform his penance well.

6. King David gladly accepted his penance from God. He knew very well: that is only a little as compared with the eternal punishment. The penitent ought also to accept the penance gladly from the confessor and perform it well. But suppose the penitent neglects his penance, what then?—A child makes a good Confession. All goes well and the child is glad. It receives only a small penance. Then it thinks to itself: "That is little; I will gladly say it." But in its carelessness later on it says only half of the pen-

ance and that badly. Is the Confession valid?—The Confession is and remains valid; but the child has committed a sin and loses many graces of Confession. —*If after the Confession the penitent does not perform the penance, which in Confession he was willing to perform, the Confession is not rendered invalid; but he commits a new sin, and deprives himself of many graces. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* Later on the child gets to be very bad. As penance it must pray the Stations of the Cross. At once it thinks: "That is too much!" In that state of mind it receives the absolution. Is that child really absolved by God?—No, the entire Confession is worthless; it is and remains invalid.

Write on the blackboard:

1. Penance—satisfaction.
2. Absolution—mortal sin—eternal punishment—temporal punishment (?)
3. Temporal punishment—on earth—in Purgatory.
4. Penance—1. satisfies for temporal punishment (5); 2. teaches the evil of sin; 3. prevents falling back into sin.
6. Penance—prayer, fasting, almsgiving.
7. Omission of penance—1. When only a sin? 2. When an invalid Confession?

Synthesis. To a good Confession there belongs also satisfaction or penance. What do you mean by satisfaction or penance? — Why is a penance imposed?—Does God remit with sin also all punishment?—Which punishment is called temporal?—Why does God require temporal punishment?—Why does the confessor impose a penance after Confession?—Which are some of the works of satisfaction or penance?—Is Confession without penance valid?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. Punishment follows upon sin. If the sin is forgiven then all the punishment is not necessarily also forgiven. We saw that in the case of King David. Do you know another example?—Moses in the desert; the people of Israel.—Penance takes the place of Purgatory. But I would like to know: Is the whole punishment of Purgatory remitted? That depends not only upon the penance, but also and that especially upon your contrition. If your contrition is a burning contrition like Purgatory, it takes the place of Purgatory.

Once there came a great sinner to a holy Bishop—Peter of Corbeil. All contrite of heart and in bitter tears the sinner confessed his terrible sins. So great was his contrition, that he said: "My Father, I will suffer death a thousand times, if only God will be merciful to me!" The Bishop said to him: "I will give you only a penance of seven years." The sinner answered: "How! I am to do penance for those great sins only for seven years!" The Bishop answered: "I will also shorten this time of your penance. Go, fast for three days on bread and water!" Then the sinner wept, so that his heart nearly broke for sorrow. But the Bishop said: "Now go and pray only one Our Father!" Without a word the sinner went and knelt down upon the ground and recited the penance. Suddenly he became pale and sank to the earth and was a corpse. Deeply moved the Bishop said to the people: "I believe, that he is a Saint in Heaven!"

There you see, that penance takes the place of Purgatory. Everything depends upon the contrition. Like this poor sinner you, too, ought gladly to accept the penance from the confessor, and perform it well. The better the penance, the better for you. You will see that best of all, when you die.

LESSON XXXIV.

Voluntary Satisfaction.

Catechetical Unit:

1) Which are the chief means by which we satisfy God for the temporal punishment due to sin? L. XIX, Q. 221.

2) Should we perform the penance only which the confessor lays upon us? (Deharbe)

Preparation. Dear children, the people of Israel murmured against God and His holy leader, Moses, in the desert. The Lord became very angry at that and determined to destroy them utterly. However, Moses interceded with God for them, and the Lord answered: "I have forgiven according to thy word. But yet all the men that have seen My Majesty and the signs which I have done in Egypt, and in the wilderness, shall not see the land, which I promised to their fathers" (Numbers xiv, 20s). God, therefore, forgives the sin; but He wants that His justice should still have the power of punishing with temporal punishments those, who have sinned. Out of six hundred thousand men, the old people and the women not being counted, only Josue and Caleb reached the Promised Land. Moses himself, on account of his lack of faith in the Lord and in punishment for his sin, did not enter the Promised Land, although God had pardoned that sin. You see, then, that we have to do penance for a time for our sins. Let us review this lesson. *(Question the pupils on the foregoing lesson.)*—The penitent receives from the confessor a penance; he must perform that conscientiously. But there are people, who imagine, that if they have performed this little penance, then all is over. Oh! they deceive themselves. One does not get rid of Purgatory as easily as that. You know yourselves: God forgives the eternal punishment, but not always the temporal punishment. The sinner must generally satisfy for a part of it himself.—The Saints

knew that very well; therefore they were zealous penitents. Just think of the life of St. Aloysius! What do you still know of his life?—You see, even the little Saint sometimes sinned a little in his life. For these little, youthful faults, later on he did much and severe penance. Now I shall relate to you, how zealously St. Aloysius did penance for all his sins.

Aim. From him you can learn: *how you also ought to do penance voluntarily.*

Presentation. You already know how zealous little Aloysius was before his First Holy Confession. But he was just as zealous after his confession. He performed his penance conscientiously. But that was not enough for him. He wanted to do some penance himself, of his own free will.

Aloysius was a little weak. Therefore his servant would sometimes place a little foot-stool, or a carpet, before him, when he was at his prayers, so that he might kneel more easily. However, Aloysius refused that help and knelt on the bare floor. Oftentimes he arose in the night to pray. He did that even in the cold winter. Now it happened, of course, that at times his whole body became stiff and numb with the cold and he fell to the ground from weakness.—He was just as zealous in regard to fasting as he was at praying. Twice each week he kept a strict fast, once on Friday and again on Saturday. On these days he ate only three little pieces of bread, which he dipped into water. He also fasted in the same way on the vigils of great feasts. At other times also he was always temperate in eating and drinking, so that many wondered: How a man could live like that!—But Aloysius wanted to chastise his body not only by fasting, but also by crucifying his body, as it were, whenever he could. He did not want a soft and warm bed for sleeping; no, he laid himself upon a piece of board in the bed to hurt his body. Likewise during the winter sea-

son he never allowed anyone to heat his room, so that his hands often were swollen with the cold and hurt him severely.—As strict as the Saint was with himself, so good and kind was he with others. The poor especially were his pets. He helped them whenever he could, and gave wherever he could. Yes, he was saving with himself, in order that he might give joy to the poor children.

In his eighteenth year Aloysius left his father and mother and brothers and sisters and home and became a poor, simple brother in a convent. There it was his greatest joy to be allowed to perform the lowest kind of work: to sweep the corridors and the rooms or to wash the dishes in the kitchen. Yes, this son of a prince even went in the streets from door to door, to beg alms for the poor. But on Sundays he gathered the children about him and explained the Catechism to them.

At that time there broke out a deadly pest in Rome. Then you should have seen the Saint! Untiringly he nursed the sick in the hospitals, gave them medicine, arranged their beds, counseled them to bear their sufferings gladly and patiently and to die in resignation to God's holy will. However, soon Aloysius also was seized by the dreadful disease. He suffered great pains. But never did he utter a single word of complaint. He accepted without murmur or complaint the bitter pills and medicine, which the doctor gave him, hard as it was. In a short while his powers were devoured by the sickness. The doctor said, that the end was near. Then Aloysius began to sing: "Holy God, we praise Thy name!" With joy he said to the priest: "Gladly I go away from here!" "Where to?" asked the priest. "Into Heaven, to God into Heaven." And so it was. While dying the Saint prayed: "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit!" Then only a few more pious, gentle sighs: "Jesus, Jesus!"—and the Saint was dead.

Explanation. Would you also like to die as piously as Aloysius?—If so, you must also do penance zealously now. Let us look a little more closely at the works of penance and satisfaction of this Saint.

1. Aloysius was untiring in prayer; he prayed "without ceasing," as St. Paul admonishes us (I Thess. v, 17); he prayed day and night. Do you not think that all that praying and kneeling sometimes seemed hard to him? Do you not think, that the bitter cold of winter also hurt him severely? But the Saint gladly endured all—for love of God and as penance for his sins. For one can do penance by praying. Prayer is a work of penance.—How else did Aloysius do penance?—The Saint was zealous in fasting. To be sure, he would have preferred good food to fasting; and he would have been allowed to eat that too. Still he abstained from it and conquered the longing to satisfy his palate—for love of God and in penance for his sins. For to fast is to do penance. Fasting is a work of penance.—(Why should we all fast?)—How severely did he not treat his body! If a sick person is unable to sleep at night, how long does not the time seem to him! He imagines, that it is like a little eternity. But Aloysius voluntarily kept awake for hours during the night by praying; and when he went to sleep, he also hurt his body by lying on that hard board. Why did he treat his body so severely?—For love of God and in penance for his sins. For to hurt one's body, to cause it pain, to mortify the body, is a penance, too. Mortification is a work of penance.—Tell me further: Why was Aloysius a friend of the poor? Why did he so gladly instruct the childen in Christian Doctrine? Why did he so kindly nurse the poor sick, as the kindest of mothers nurses her child? Why did he even go begging from house to house?—All for love of God and in penance for his sins; for such corporal and spiritual works of mercy are works of penance.—Finally Aloysius never became impatient, when things did not go according to his liking. If he had to put up

with disappointments, or sorrows, if his body ached and the people treated him unkindly, no matter what happened to him, he bore all the ills of life patiently for love of God and in penance for his sins. To bear patiently the ills of life is also a work of penance. Now let us put the whole answer together: **The chief means by which we satisfy God for temporal punishments due to sin are: Prayer, Fasting, Almsgiving, all spiritual and corporal works of mercy, and the patient suffering of the ills of life.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

2. a) Now, of course, many will say: Why so much penance?—All that was not necessary. Yes, thus do shortsighted worldlings talk; but true children of God think otherwise and speak otherwise. Do you see? The good God is just. He demands, therefore, penance for sin. The sinner is bound to do so much, that it is enough in the sight of God; he must satisfy the Divine Justice. Whoever is unwilling to do that now, must do that some time in Purgatory. St. Aloysius knew that very well. Therefore he preferred to do penance and to suffer now, rather than do it some day in Purgatory. Did he act wisely? We also ought to do as he did. *We should also endeavor to satisfy the Divine Justice by other voluntary works of penance. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* Of course, it is true: St. Aloysius did more satisfaction or penance than the just God demanded. But he did not do penance in vain; he received his reward in Heaven for doing it.

b) Finally the good God also placed another hard penance on the Saint.—His love for the sick made Aloysius himself ill. He had to suffer great pains. Many a one becomes impatient in his sufferings and at once complains in a very unchristian manner: "How did I deserve that? How can God send me anything like that?" Did Aloysius act like that? No, he bore his heavy sufferings with a heavenly patience. The greater the suffering, the greater was his joy. Never

did he complain, but he always prayed as Jesus did: "Father! not mine by Thy will be done!" Thus does a true Christian suffer: .*He endeavors to satisfy the Divine Justice by his patience in his sufferings. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*—But the most bitter thing in life is death. Many Christians do not like to die at all. Aloysius was entirely different; he greeted death like a dear Angel from Heaven. Do you see? Thus does a true Christian act. *He dies in penance for his sins* and thinks and prays at the same time: "Lord, Thy will be done even though it does hurt ever so much!"

Write on the blackboard:

1. Works of penance—(1) prayer, fasting, mortification; (2) corporal and spiritual works of mercy; (3) bearing patiently the ills of life.
2. Penance from God—patience in sufferings and death.

Synthesis. The whole life of St. Aloysius was a life penance. What works of penance did he perform?—How was the Saint in sufferings and death?—Why did Aloysius want to do penance so zealously? The Saint is a model for us all. Should we perform only the penance which the confessor gives us?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. Just think again of Aloysius! Now he is in eternal life for his holy life of penance. Do you think, that he feels sorry for his penance?—Recall other holy penitents! How did Magdalen do penance? Peter?—

2. Children, you also ought gladly to do penance. Of course, the good God does not demand that you should do penance as zealously as Aloysius did. We can admire much in the Saint, but not imitate it. But what penances ought you to take upon yourselves of your own free will?—The easiest thing is prayer. You

might offer to God the Stations of the Cross, the Rosary, especially Holy Mass, as penance. You also can sometimes fast a little—If you are thirsty, do not drink; if your favorite food is placed on the table, eat a little less than you would like to eat. You can also mortify yourselves in regard to your eyes: do not look at everything curiously; fast with your ears—do not listen to everything; fast with your tongue—do not talk too much. Sometimes you can also get up a quarter of an hour earlier and go to Holy Mass. If it is cold in winter, do not complain, but say: "I will do penance; the Christ Child also had to freeze." Sometimes you can also do a little work of mercy.—Give something to poor children; gladly give the alms for the poor heathen children. Perhaps the good God will send you a penance—sickness, poverty; then think to yourselves: I will gladly accept that and bear it.

Do you see? Those are mostly little things and yet, they are worth a great deal, if you like Aloysius do all for love of God and for penance. All of that will become easy for you, if you think of Purgatory. Just look at the Poor Souls! What do you suppose they would do, if they were allowed to return once more to earth? They would act just as Aloysius did: they would do penance day and night. But they are not allowed to return anymore. Now they can only sigh: Oh! if only I had been a little more zealous in doing penance, I would have been in Heaven a long time ago, But now I must burn and satisfy—Oh! how long, how long?

LESSON XXXV.

Indulgences.

Catechetical Unit:

1) By what means does the Church assist us in the discharge of the temporal punishments due to our sins? (Deharbe)

2) What is an Indulgence? L. XXI, Q. 231.

3) Is an Indulgence a pardon of sin or a license to commit sin? L. XXI, Q. 232.

4) What is a Plenary Indulgence? L. XXI, Q. 234.

5) What is a Partial Indulgence? L. XXI, Q. 235.

6) How many kinds of Indulgences are there? L. XXI, Q. 233.

7) What must we believe with regard to Indulgences? (Deharbe)

8) How does the Church by means of Indulgences remit the temporal punishment due to sin? L. XXI, Q. 236.

Preparation. Dear children, let us first review what we learned in the last lesson. *(Question the pupils briefly on the foregoing lesson.)*—You know: every sin deserves punishment. To mortal sin there attaches eternal punishment, to venial sin temporal punishment. How is the eternal punishment remitted?—God always remits the eternal punishment with the sin, but not always the temporal punishment. But we can also get rid of the temporal punishment—thanks be to God!—How is that possible? That can be done: (1) by the penance imposed by the confessor; but generally a part still remains; (2) by the voluntary penance of the penitent; (3) by the penance imposed by God—by patiently bearing the ills of life; (4) by the penance of the Church—I mean by an Indulgence. For the Church is a very solicitous Mother. She fears, that many of her children would otherwise be obliged some day to remain in Purgatory until the end of the world. Therefore *the Church assists us in the discharge of the temporal punishment due to our sins by the grant of Indulgence. (Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)* You have often heard of Indulgences. But perhaps you do not yet clearly understand what an Indulgence is.

Aim. I will now explain to you: *What is an Indulgence?* Pay strict attention! for an Indulgence is not an easy matter to understand.

Presentation. The penitent receives a penance from the confessor. But the penance is very slight. In the old days of the Christian Church the penances were much greater. You have already heard: For careless swearing a person had to fast seven days on bread and water. A liar did not fare any better. Whoever insulted and cursed his parents, received a penance that lasted for forty days. For talking in church there was imposed as penance a strict fast of ten days. Yes, many a sinner received penances, that lasted his whole life. So strict were the penances, or punishments, imposed by the Church. And yet, most of the Christians gladly accepted their penances; for they knew very well: I have deserved an entirely different penance from God for my sins!—Now if a sinner was very zealous in performing his penance, the Church, too, showed herself to be a kind Mother; she forgave, remitted, a part or even the whole penance of the sinner. Just listen!

A Christian has fallen away from the Church and gone over to a false religion. That was, indeed, a great sin. But soon his eyes were opened: What have I done! Now he repented of his sins most bitterly and confessed them sincerely. Then he hastened, weeping and clothed in penitential garb, to our Holy Father, the Pope, and cast himself at his feet. And because his contrition was so burning and his zeal for penance so great, the Pope remitted the entire punishment imposed by the Church (the ecclesiastical punishment).

One thing more! Formerly the Christians were often cruelly martyred, or tortured, for Christ and the Christian Faith. Then it happened frequently, that a poor sinner would say to a martyr: Oh, put in a good word for me with the Bishop! Then the Bishop would remit generally a part of the penance, but only

after the sinner had confessed and performed a part of the penance for his sin. That is how Indulgences originated.

Later on all that was changed. The Church declared: Whoever performs some good work—prays, fasts, gives alms, receives the Sacraments—will receive for that good work a remission of the temporal punishment due his sins. That is still the custom today in the Church.

Explanation. 1. When one has confessed, all is not finished; the penitent must still do penance for his sins. In like manner when one has performed the penance, all is not yet finished; generally some temporal punishment still remains. Now just think of the sinner, about whom I have just told you in the story! What sin did he commit?—He fell way from the Christian Faith; however, he repented of his sins and confessed and did penance for it. Did that sinner do all the penance himself?—No, our Holy Father, the Pope, forgave, remitted the punishment due his sins, because that sinner had such great zeal in performing his penance. Do you see? That was an Indulgence—**a remission, in whole or in part, of the temporal punishment due to sin.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

How good and kind our Holy Mother, the Church, is to us! If you think of the number of your past sins, and the many sins which you commit each day; if you think how small the penance is, which the confessor imposes upon you in Confession, and how little penance you do of your own free will; can you doubt, that you have still a great deal of penance to perform for your sins? Must you not fear, that you will never be able to pay all the debts as long as you live upon earth?—Therefore the Church comes to our assistance by helping us to get rid of these temporal punishments —she grants us Indulgences.

2. a) Many non-Catholics falsely accuse the Church in regard to Indulgences. In the first place, they say, that when the Church grants us an Indulgence, she remits, forgives, our past *sins*. That is not true. How do we Catholics get rid of sin?—In the Sacrament of Penance, or Confession. When the priest absolves the sinner, God Himself forgives the sin, and at the same time the eternal punishments due to sin. Yes, God generally also takes away a part of the temporal punishment due to sin. But that is not an Indulgence.

Just think of our story! When our Holy Father remitted the temporal punishment of the sinner, he did not do this in Confession. That took place *outside of Confession.* In like manner when a sinner gained an Indulgence at the request of a martyr, that sinner had first to confess his sin and do penance. Only then did the Bishop grant him an Indulgence. You see, then, that **an Indulgence is not a pardon for sin.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* An Indulgence is a remission of the temporal *punishment* which, even after the sin is forgiven, we have yet to undergo, either here or in Purgatory. An Indulgence is granted not *in* Confession, but *outside* of Confession, or the Sacrament of Penance. As long as the sinner remains in sin, he is deserving of punishment. Therefor he must first have his sin forgiven in Confession; only then can he have the temporal punishment due his sins taken away by an Indulgence.

b) Some non-Catholics go even farther in their false notions about Indulgence. They say, that when the Pope or a Bishop grants an Indulgence, he gives the sinner permission, or license, to commit sin. How can people be so foolish! The Church teaches, that a sinner cannot gain an Indulgence while he is in mortal sin. First the sinner must feel sorry for his sin and confess it. Only after he has received the absolution of the priest and done some penance for his sin, can he hope to receive an Indulgence. **An Indulgence is not**

a license to commit sin, and one who is in the state of mortal sin, cannot gain an Indulgence. *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. The sinner of our story threw himself at the feet of the Pope and was filled with contrition for his sins. Why did he do this?—He wanted to ask for the remission of the temporal punishment due his sins. How much of this temporal punishment did the Pope remit? —He forgave the sinner the entire punishment. Therefore that was a Plenary Indulgence. If the sinner had died immediately after this, he would have gone directly into Heaven. For whoever gains a Plenary Indulgence, has received the remission of all the temporal punishment due his sins; he does not need to go to Purgatory at all. **A Plenary Indulgence is the full remission of the temporal punishment due to sin.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

4. But it is not so easy to gain a Plenary Indulgence. For that we need a heart, that is filled with holy love and contrition, a thoroughly holy Christian mind and heart. Only few people are able to do that. As long as there is the smallest stain of sin in the soul, there is no Plenary Indulgence. Whoever wants to be free from all the punishment due his sins, must first be free from every sin.—But the Pope could also have remitted only a part of the temporal punishment due to sin. That was generally the case, when a martyr asked the Bishop to free the sinner from the temporal punishment due his sins. In such a case it would not have been a Plenary Indulgence, but only a Partial Indulgence.—**A Partial Indulgence is the remission in part of the temporal punishment due to sin.** *(Repeat togther; use the blackboard.)*

You see, then, **there are two kinds of Indulgences—Plenary and Partial.** *(Repeat together.)*

5. a) But tell me: From whom has the Holy Father the power of remitting the temporal punishment due to sin?—This power comes from Christ. He said ex-

pressly to Peter: "Whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, it shall be loosed also in Heaven" (Matt. xvi, 19). Those are great words. What did Christ mean to say?—If you loose, remit, sins upon earth, they are loosed, or remitted, also in Heaven. Where does that happen?—If you loose, remit, the punishments due to sin, they are also loosed, remitted, in Heaven. That happens by an Indulgence.—You see, then: *we must believe that the Catholic Church has the power from Christ to grant Indulgences. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* Formerly Peter and the other Apostles were allowed to grant Indulgences; now the Pope does it. The Bishops now have the power only of granting some Partial Indulgences.

b) But there are many Christians, who do not value Indulgences at all. Is an Indulgence really worth nothing at all?—An Indulgence takes the place of Purgatory; is that not worth anything? How glad and thankful will not a sinner be some day for an Indulgence! An Indulgence is a great gain for us; therefore we say: to *gain* an Indulgence. Many people imagine also, that by Indulgences sinners are kept back from doing penance.—No, the very opposite is true: sinners are thereby urged to do penance. Why? We shall see afterwards.—*We believe that the use of Indulgences is very salutary for us. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

6. But now a doubt comes to my mind. God demands penance, satisfaction, for every sin; for He is just. But the sinner of our story had the penance forgiven him; he did not have to do all the penance himself. Who paid God the money to atone for him? Who did the penance for him?—Listen to a parable! In a family father, mother and children work and earn a nice fortune. Only one son is a good-for-nothing fellow. He lives a free and easy life from day to day and contracts debts carelessly and gets into misery and can no longer help himself. However, his father has a good heart and says: "After all he is my son; I must help

him again." And so he pays the debts from the family fortune.—We all belong to a large Christian family, the Catholic Church. There, too, there are good and bad children, Saints and sinners. In this Christian family we have a holy family possession, a family treasury. Of course there is not money in it, but rather all good works and merits. But from whom?—In it there is all, that Jesus earned by His life and sufferings and death, and that is infinitely much and precious. In it there is all, that the dear Mother of God has earned. In it there is all, that the Saints have earned. Recall what I have told you about the Martyrs, how sometimes they offered their merits to sinners. All that is a holy family treasury; we call it the treasury of the Church—the spiritual treasury. The merits, which the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Saints earned by their good and virtuous life, were more than enough for themselves, much more than they needed for themselves. We say: those merits were superabundant. Were those merits lost, when Mary and the Saints died?—No indeed; they were kept in the spiritual treasury of the Church. But who is the treasurer?—Our Holy Father, the Pope, is the treasurer. He may take from the Church treasury and pay our debts—the temporal punishments due our sins. That then is an Indulgence.—**The Church by means of Indulgence remits the temporal punishment due to sin by applying to us the merits of Jesus Christ, and the superabundant satisfactions of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of the Saints; which merits and satisfactions are its spiritual treasury.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

1. Church helps us to get rid of temporal *punishments* due to sin—by Indulgences.

2. Indulgence—remission, in whole or part, of temporal *punishment* due to sin: not pardon for sin: not license to sin (3)

4. Indulgence—(a) Plenary—full remission; (b) Partial—part remission.

5. We believe—(a) Indulgence—from Christ; (b) Indulgence—very salutary for us.

6. Merits of Christ, satisfaction of Mary and Saints —spiritual treasury.

Synthesis. Do you now understand what an Indulence is?—We have written the chief points on the blackboard. How does the Church help us to satisfy for the temporal punishment due to our sins?—What is an Indulgence?—Is it a pardon for sin?—a license to commit sin?—How many kinds of Indulgences are there?—What is a Plenary Indulgence?—A Partial Indulgence?—Why is it hard to gain a Plenary Indulgence?—What must we Catholics believe in regard to Indulgences?—Why do we say that Indulgences are a gain?—How does the Church pay God for the punishments we owe for our sins?—Who grants Indulgences? —*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. In a Partial Indulgence only a part of the temporal punishment due our sins is remitted. But how much of the punishment?—Just see! You say devoutly: "Praised be Jesus Christ?"—and for that you gain an Indulgence of fifty days. Have fifty days been pardoned you now from Purgatory?—Many people think so. But that is not so. Imagine that you are living in the early days of the Church. You commit a certain sin and for that you receive from the Church a penance that lasts for fifty days. But instead of doing that penance, now you recite that Christian salutation devoutly: "Praised be Jesus Christ!" Your penance is over. You see, therefore, that an Indulgence of fifty days is a remission of fifty days penance, which the Church used to prescribe in

the early days. But how much does that take away from Purgatory?—I cannot tell you that; that lies hidden in God's hands.

2. Now listen to another example! Your First Holy Confession did not take place so very long ago. In Holy Confession your hearts became pure again from sins and free from eternal punishment; but perhaps some of the temporal punishment is still left to be atoned for. But you want to get rid of all. How can that be done?—You pray the Stations of the Cross devoutly and contritely. For that you gain a Plenary Indulgence and you are freed from all punishment. If you have gained the Plenary Indulgence, you can die in peace; your soul is already ripe for Heaven.—Do you see now what a precious treasure an Indulgence is? Yes, we cannot thank the good God enough for having given such a power to His Church. A thousand thanks to Thee, O Jesus, for Thy heavenly gift!

LESSON XXXVI.

Gaining An Indulgence.

Catechetical Unit:

1) What must one do to gain an Indulgence? L. XXI, Q. 237.

2) Can Indulgences also be rendered available for the souls in Purgatory? (Deharbe)

Preparation. Dear children, you know what an Indulgence is. Let us review that briefly. *(Question the pupils on the foregoing lesson.)*—Now I have yet to tell you the principal thing:

Aim. *How can you gain an Indulgence?*

Presentation. In your prayer-books you will find many prayers to which are attached Indulgences. Open

your book at the prayers after Holy Communion! (Open your Catechism, page 76!) There you see the following prayer:

"Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, while before Thy face I humbly kneel, and with burning soul, pray and beseech Thee to fix deeply in my heart lively sentiments, of faith, hope, and charity, true contrition for my sins, and a firm purpose of amendment; and while I contemplate with great love and tender pity Thy five wounds, pondering over them within me, and calling to mind the words which David, Thy Prophet, said of Thee, my Jesus: They have pierced My hands and My feet; they have numbered all My bones." (Ps. XXI, 17, 18.)

Just below this prayer is attached a little notice, which reads: A Plenary Indulgence, which can be applied to the souls in Purgatory, may be gained by the faithful, who after having confessed and received Holy Communion, shall devoutly recite the above prayer before an image or picture of Christ crucified, and pray for the intentions of the Holy Father. (Pius IX, July 31, 1858.)

Explanation. 1. Here you have a Plenary Indulgence; therefore a remission of all the temporal punishments due to sin. What is the principal thing in the whole affair?—Whoever wants to gain the Plenary Indulgence, must first confess, so that he may be made a child of God's grace. Confession is not necessary for every Plenary Indulgence, but the state of grace is always necessary. For one who is in mortal sin, there is no Indulgence. Who knows the reason?—A person in mortal sin is an enemy of God. First sin must be done away with; only then is the punishment taken away. Remember that well: **To gain an Indulgence we must be in the state of grace.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)* For a person in mortal sin an Indulgence would also be entirely useless. Why?—Just see!

There is a child that has a deadly disease and also a toothache. The toothache stops, but the deadly disease continues.—The poor child must die, of course. Just so is it in regard to the poor sinner. A person in mortal sin deserves eternal punishment. What has he, if the temporal punishment is forgiven him? Why, he remains bound to Hell just as long as he remains in mortal sin.

2. An Indulgence is a precious gift of Heaven. But we do not receive it altogether gratis; we also must do something; pray, visit some church, receive the Sacraments, give alms. Let us look at what good works are required for the Plenary Indulgence, about which we have just been speaking. There we read expressly: (1) Whoever wants to gain the Indulgence must confess and receive Holy Communion. (2) This prayer must be recited before a crucifix, or an image of the crucified Saviour; otherwise it is useless for the Indulgence. (3) It is necessary to say the prayer devoutly and with contrite heart. Prayer said carelessly and with distraction is, of course, a sin. (4) Finally we must pray for the needs of Holy Church. What does that mean?—That means: we must pray, that the good God may protect the Church against her enemies; pray that He may spread the Church continually more and more among the heathens; pray, that He may lead back to the true Church all, who are in a false faith; those are the petitions, or needs, of Holy Church: the intentions of the Holy Father. For that purpose you may recite the prayers, that follow in the prayer-book after Holy Communion, or five Our Fathers and Hail Marys. Whoever omits only one of these points, does not gain the Indulgence. **For to gain an Indulgence we must perform the works enjoined.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. Now look again at the notice below the prayer! There the words are also added: "A Plenary Indulgence, which can be applied to the Souls in Purgatory." How must that be understood?—I gain the Indulgence

for my own poor soul. But I can also apply the Indulgence to the Poor Souls in Purgatory, or offer it to them as a pious alms. The Holy Father, the treasurer of Indulgences, has said so. That is true in regard to most Indulgences.—*All Indulgences are available to the souls in Purgatory, which the Pope has expressly declared to be applicable to them. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

But hold! I have still a little doubt: If I gain the Plenary Indulgence, I am freed from all temporal punishment. Now I offer that Indulgence to a Poor Soul; will that soul be freed from Purgatory?—Perhaps; but I do not know for sure. All that we can do is to beg the good God; it is His concern to give or not to give. For He alone can free from Purgatory. But even though I do apply the Indulgence to the Poor Souls, I am not the loser thereby; the heavenly reward will remain to me for giving this pious alms; I cannot lose that.

Write on the blackboard:

1. To gain an Indulgence:
   a) state of grace;
   b) good works.
2. Indulgence—for the Poor Souls.

Synthesis. Now you know all that a good Christian ought to know about Indulgences. Let us reveiw again today's lesson. What is necessary to gain an Indulgence?—Why cannot a person in mortal sin gain an Indulgence?—Can we also apply Indulgence to the Poor Souls? *(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. In a certain Catholic country of Europe (Bavaria) the beautiful custom obtained, that every year at Christmas the king used to grant to many prisoners their liberty as a present. Then they

were free and were permitted to go home to their families and celebrate the Holy Feast of the Lord's Nativity. You can well imagine what a joy that must have been and how thankful the people were for that gift.—We all are also prisoners, who deserve to be put in God's prison, Purgatory. But the good Lord wants to remit our punishment, as a favor, a grace, and that indeed not only at Christmas, but every day. That happens by means of Indulgences. What a happiness, if some day at least, or immediately after death, we may enter into Heaven! Therefore we cannot thank God enough for Indulgences, and we ought to use them zealously. Yes, a good Christian child ought to have a holy covetousness in its heart for Indulgences; that is not a sin, but rather a virtue.

2. But, children, do not forget the Poor Souls! O, how happy would not they be to receive an Indulgence! But over there there is no Indulgence any longer. Therefore they call out imploringly: "Dear children, have mercy on us and give us an Indulgence!" The Poor Souls will some day thank you, when they are rich souls in Heaven.

3. Finally I want to tell you some more Indulgences, which you can easily gain. With each sign of the cross you gain an Indulgence of fifty days; if you at the same time take Holy Water you gain an Indulgence of one hundred days. For the little prayer: "My Jesus, mercy!" there is an Indulgence of one hundred days. "Sweet Heart of Jesus, grant that I may love Thee more and more!"—three hundred days Indulgence. "Sweet Heart of Mary, be my salvation!" —three hundred days Indulgence. For the Angelus —one hundred days Indulgence. For the acts of Faith, Hope and Charity—seven years and seven quarantines (that is, a fast for forty days). "O Jesus, meek and humble of Heart, make my heart like unto Thine!"—three hundred days Indulgence. For saying the Stations of the Cross you can gain even a Plenary Indulgence. But you must pass from one station to the

other and meditate on the Passion of Christ. If the people make the Stations together with the priest, they may kneel and stand in turn in their pews at each station, while the priest passes from station to station.

4. Just see, children, by means of Indulgences you can redeem yourselves from Purgatory. So little do you have to give, and so much is given to you. Therefore each morning *make the good intention* of gaining all the Indulgences you can. First offer the entire day to the good God: "My God and Lord, all for Thy honor!" Then also add: "O God, grant me all the Indulgences, which I can gain today!" How happy that will make you feel in the last dread hour!

IV.
HOLY EUCHARIST

LESSON XXXVII.

The True Bread From Heaven.

(Supplementary)

Catechetical Unit:

Did Jesus promise to give to His disciples His real Flesh to eat and His real Blood to drink?

Aim. Dear children, we have till now learned to know more fully the first three Sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation and Penance. The Sacrament, about which you are now to hear, is holier than these three and holier than the three others that follow. It is called the "Most Blessed Sacrament." Before Christ instituted this Sacrament, He solemnly promised it. We are going to hear of that today: *How Jesus promised to give to His disciples and to us all the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. (Use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

Preparation. Let us look for the Lake of Genesareth on a map of the Holy Land. Where is Capharnaum?—There Jesus loved most of all to spend His time. On the north-eastern shore lies the little town of Bethsaida. Further back little hills arise. But in between there is a wild and deserted country. There in the desert occurred the wonderful multiplication of the bread: Jesus fed five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes. When the people had seen the miracle, they cried out: "This is of a truth the Prophet, that is to come into the world, the Messias!" Yes, they wanted to lead Jesus by force to Jerusalem and make Him king. But Jesus went away from them secretly and betook Himself to a nearby mountain; there He spent the whole night in prayer. Surely that is not without meaning; Jesus must have something important in view. The next morning He came down again from the mountain and went to Capharnaum. At once

the people hastened to Him in crowds. Then Jesus preached a remarkable sermon about the true Bread from Heaven.

Presentation. When Jesus saw the multitude of people, He scolded them, saying: "You seek Me, because you did eat of the loaves and were filled. Labour not for the meat, which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto life everlasting, which the Son of man will give you." The Jews said to Him: "Lord, give us always this bread." But Jesus replied: "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall not hunger; and he that believeth in Me, shall never thirst. I am the word of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the desert, and are dead. This is the bread, which cometh down from heaven: that if any man eat of it, he may not die. *I am the living bread, which came down from Heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever. And the bread, that I will give is My Flesh for the life of the world.*" (John vi).

Therefore the Jews quarrelled among themselves and said: "How can this man give us His Flesh to eat?" Then Jesus said to them again: "Amen, amen I say to you: Except you eat the Flesh of the Son of man, and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you. He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, hath everlasting life and I will raise him up on the last day. For My Flesh is meat indeed and My Blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood, abideth in Me and I in him. He that eateth this bread, shall live forever."

The Jews could not understand these words. Many of them said: "This is a hard saying. Who can bear it?" Therefore they left Jesus and walked no longer with Him. Then Jesus said to the twelve: "Will you also go away?" But Simon Peter answered: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and have known, that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God!"

Explanation. Dear children, you too are not yet able to understand all of Jesus' sermon. I am going to explain to you briefly the chief points.

1. Jesus had fed the people in a wonderful manner. Immediately on the following morning the crowds came to Him. What did they want?—They hoped, of course, that Jesus would multiply the bread again. Not to work at all and yet to eat, that would have pleased the most of them. The Saviour understood their thoughts at once; therefore His reprimand: "You seek Me, because you did eat of the loaves, and were filled." But then He also added these words of counsel: "Labor not for the meat, which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto life everlasting, which the Son of man will give you." The Jews understood that in an entirely false manner. They imagined, that Jesus was speaking of *an earthly food.* From what words do you see that?—"Lord, give us always this bread!" The poor, blind Jews! They had many cares for the body, but little care for the soul.

2. Now Jesus explained to them a little more exactly what He meant. "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to Me shall not hunger; and he that believeth in Me, shall not thirst." Do you understand the Saviour?—The heart of man has hunger and thirst for the truth. But he that believeth in Christ, has the truth and does not have to hunger and thirst any more. Therefore Jesus is speaking of *a heavenly food,* of the bread of Faith. But it seems, that the Jews did not understand that. Now Jesus speaks even more clearly: "Your fathers did eat manna in the desert, and are dead."—Jesus means to say: Your fathers received a wonderful heavenly bread in the desert, and yet, they had to die; for the manna too was only an earthly food. But whoever eats *the bread of Faith,* will not die. Is that true?—He will indeed die; but he only dies, in order to live forever.

3. Up to now the sermon was only about the bread of Faith. But now something else comes: "I am the

living bread. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever. And the bread, which I will give you is My Flesh for the life of the world." The bread of Faith Jesus *has* already given; but another bread He *will* soon give to His disciples. What sort of bread does Jesus mean?—This mysterious bread is *Christ's own Flesh.* You already know this: When did Jesus give us this *wonderful bread from Heaven?*—That happened at the Last Supper. Then Jesus changed the bread and said: "This is My Body."

The Jews could not understand at all, that Jesus was to give His Flesh as food. What did they say to show that they were displeased and scandalized?—"How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Do you see? They really understood the Saviour, but they explained His words falsely. They imagined, that when Jesus had died they would have to eat His Flesh. But Jesus had said: "The *bread,* which I will give you is My Flesh for the life of the world." He wishes to give us *His Flesh, but in the form of bread.* The Jews were very much scandalized over that. Did the Saviour then take His words back? No, He confirmed His words, saying: "Amen, Amen, I say to you; except you eat the Flesh of the Son of man, and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in yourselves." Who can explain that?—It is just as He said: You must eat My Flesh and drink My Blood; only then will you have life in yourselves—the life of grace. Yes, more than that: through the power of this wonderful heavenly bread some day you will arise to eternal life. So it is. And in order that there may be no doubt at all, Jesus repeats again: "My Flesh is meat indeed: and My Blood is drink indeed!"

4. Many of Jesus' disciples were scandalized at these words. What did they say to one another?—What they did not understand they did not want to believe, and therefore they no longer wanted to remain with Jesus. But the Saviour quietly allows them to

go away; for He cannot use such disciples. By their *unbelief* they foolishly threw away and lost eternal life.

5. But now the Lord turned to His disciples and said: "Will you too go away?" Why this question? —The Saviour not only asked His disciples, but even demanded of them: If you do not want to believe, just go away! I do not need you; I shall find others, who will believe My words! Then Peter speaks the decisive words: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life!" He meant to say: Lord! we do not understand Thee. But *we believe* and we will not go away; for Thou hast said it, God's Son. Thy word is truth!

Write on the blackboard:

Promise of the true heavenly bread:

"I am the living bread, which came down from Heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever. And the bread that I will give is My Flesh for the life of the world."

Synthesis. The Apostles did not understand their Divine Master; we understand Him. Let us repeat the chief points.—Why did Jesus reprimand the multitudes?—How did He direct their thoughts to the heavenly bread?—How did the Jews understand these words?—What reward did Jesus promise them, that believed in Him?—What is the difference between the bread of Faith and the manna?—What bread did Jesus promise to give to His disciples later on?—How did the Jews explain these words?—With what words does Jesus demand, that we eat His Flesh and drink His Blood?—What effect does He ascribe to the eating of this food and drink?—How did many of Jesus' disciples receive this speech of Jesus?—How did the Apostles receive it?—When did Jesus give us what is promised in this sermon?—*(Have the pupils read the answer from the blackboard. Assign for the next class the words written on the blackboard.)*

Application. 1. The sermon of Jesus was hard to believe. The Lord wished to test His disciples. They stood the test of Faith well. For us too the Most Blessed Sacrament is a test of Faith. We ought to believe what we do not understand and do not see—Christ's Body under the form of bread! But let us say with Peter: Lord! Thou hast the words of eternal life. We believe what we do not understand; for Thy word is truth.

2. Jesus says: "My Flesh is meat indeed and My Blood is drink indeed." You too have often partaken of Christ's Flesh and Blood. What a happiness! But how pure ought not your heart to be, which receives Christ! Therefore you ought to work each day to make your heart pure and holy for Jesus. Never forget this duty!

3. The true bread from Heaven is preserved in the tabernacle. Think of that, when you enter the church. Greet Jesus by making a devout genuflection and adore Him, saying: "Honor, praise, and thanksgiving to Jesus in the Most Blessed and Adorable Sacrament of the Altar!"

LESSON XXXVIII.

The Institution of the Holy Eucharist.

Catechetical Unit:

1) How did our Lord institute the Holy Eucharist? L. XXII, Q. 241.

2) Who were present when our Lord instituted the Holy Eucharist? L. XXII, Q. 240.

3) When did Christ institute the Holy Eucharist? L. XXII, Q. 239.

Preparation. Dear children, we learned in the last class that Jesus promised in a very solemn manner to give us His Flesh to eat and His Blood to drink. Let

us first review this teaching. *(Question the pupils briefly on the preceding lesson.)*—More than a year had already passed, since Jesus promised the wonderful bread from Heaven. But as yet He had not given it to His followers. Soon He was to part from them and to suffer and to die. Therefore His Heart ached as a dying mother's heart aches. Do you know what is hardest of all to a mother's heart? That she is obliged to part from her children, that is her greatest sorrow. "Oh, if only it were not for my poor children, I would gladly die! What will happen to my children, when I am no more!" Thus does the mother then lament and weep. The Saviour's Heart, too, hurt Him severely, because He was now to part from His disciples: for He loved them as the best of mothers loves her children. However, He had to leave the world; He had to suffer and to die, in order to give us life.

But Jesus did not want to leave the world, without leaving us a memento of His love. But what was He to give us? The Saviour was indeed as poor as a beggar. He Himself said: "The foxes have their holes, the birds of the air have their nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head" (Luke ix, 58). Nothing was His own, not even His clothing. For thus had the Prophet already foretold: "They have divided My garments among them, and upon my vesture they cast lots" (Ps. xxi, 19). However, love is inventive. In His love Jesus found a means of making us rich and remaining with us to the end of the world: He gave us Himself in the Most Blessed Sacrament.

Aim. Now listen to *how Christ instituted the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.*

Presentation. The night of the Passion was come, the first Holy Thursday. Jesus and the twelve Apostles were gathered together in a room and were celebrating the Paschal Supper; for the Easter feast was near. Then Jesus spoke: "With desire I have de-

sired to eat this Pasch with you before I suffer" (Luke xxii, 15). The meal was over. Jesus arose, girded Himself with a towel, poured water into a basin and began to wash the feet of His disciples. The Lord comes to Peter. He will not permit it, saying: "Lord, Thou shalt never wash my feet!" However, Jesus wills it and the Apostle allows it. The Lord comes to Judas. He does not refuse; of course, within him his heart burns like fire. He pretends that he is innocent, while really he is hatching the devilish plan of betrayal in his heart.

And now the great moment is at hand. Jesus and His Apostles are again gathered about the table. Suddenly the countenance of the Lord becomes transfigured, as it were; a heavenly splendor shines forth from His eyes. His entire appearance is like that of a being more than earthly. A mysterious silence is in the room. The disciples had never seen their Divine Master like that before. All have a presentiment, that something great is about to happen.

Then Jesus took bread into His holy and venerable hands, raised His eyes to Heaven, to God, His heavenly Father, gave thanks, blessed the bread, and gave it to His disciples and said: "Take ye and eat. *This is My Body,* which is given for you!" In like manner He took the chalice of wine also, gave thanks again, gave it to His disciples and said: "Drink ye all of this. *This is the chalice of My Blood:* the Blood of the new and eternal testament, which is shed for you and for many unto the remission of sins. Do this in commemoration of Me!" Thanks be to Thee, O Jesus, thanks a thousand times for Thy precious heavenly gift! *(Show the children a large picture of this scene.)*

Explanation. Let us tarry a little at the Last Supper and consider what has taken place.

1. Jesus with His disciples ate the *paschal lamb.* You know how the celebration of the pasch began and why it took place.—The people of Israel wanted to

leave the captivity of Pharao, wanted to get out of Egypt. At the command of God, every father of a family had to kill a lamb without blemish and eat it with the family; but with the blood of the lamb he had to smear the threshold of his house. All the houses marked with the blood of the lamb were passed over, or spared, by the avenging angel, while in the houses of the Egyptians the first-born of the family was killed. In memory of this event and in thanksgiving for their deliverance the Israelites celebrated each year this meal. It was also called the pasch, that is, the passing over, or the sparing. The paschal lamb is the *type of the true Paschal Lamb, Christ.* Why a type?—Christ allowed Himself to be slain as a paschal lamb for us on the cross. Thus He freed us from the slavery of Satan; by His Blood He wants to preserve us from the eternal death of Hell and wants to lead us into the Promised Land—into Heaven. *(Use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

2. The celebration of the pasch was over. What we now see, we can scarcely believe to be possible: *Jesus washes the feet of His disciples.* Just reflect: the All-Holy One does that, the All-High God, to poor sinners! Peter feels that deeply; he realizes how unworthy he is of such a deed of love; therefore he does not want to allow that at any price. What does he say to his Divine Master?—It must have been a deep humiliation for Jesus to have humbled Himself so much! What do you suppose was the reason of that? The Lord wanted to give an example to His followers: You too should be humble and kind to one another! But there is also another counsel in that act of Jesus. Jesus wants to point out how pure every heart ought to be, into which He Himself is to enter in Holy Communion. How do we prepare for Holy Communion? —First we purify our heart in the holy Sacrament of Penance; only then do we go to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. *(Use the blackboard.)*

3. Now the great moment forever memorable was at hand. What Jesus had long ago promised to His disciples, that He now gives to them. What no man could imagine possible, that now really took place: Jesus gave Himself to us in the Most Blessed Sacrament. On the table there was some unleavened bread, such as the Jews had to eat at the paschal supper, and also the chalice of wine. What happened now with the bread? with the wine?—**Jesus took bread, broke, and gave it to His Apostles, saying: Take ye and eat. This is My Body. Then He took the cup of wine, blessed and gave it, saying to them: Drink ye all of this. This is My Blood which shall be shed for the remission of sins. Do this for a commemoration of Me.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* Thus did Jesus institute the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, or the Holy Eucharist.

4. You already know who were present on that solemn occasion. **When our Lord instituted the Holy Eucharist the twelve Apostles were present.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* 5. This wonderful scene took place on Holy Thursday night. The next day He was to die on the cross. Let us remember, therefore: **Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper, the night before He died.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* We will never forget this holy night and we will be eternally thankful for it.

6. Now recall again the sermon of Jesus about the wonderful bread from Heaven. The Lord had said: "The bread, which I will give you, is My Flesh for the life of the world." And again He had said: "My Flesh is meat indeed and My Blood is drink indeed." The Jews did not want to believe that. "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" And now Jesus says: "Take ye and eat. This is My Body. Drink ye all of this. This is My Blood." There we have the *promise,* here we have the *fulfilment.* What will the Jews answer to that? They must be confused and keep silence. But suddenly the eyes of the Apostles were opened:

Yes, now we are able to eat the Flesh of the Lord and drink His Blood. Do you see? If we believe Christ's words, we will always be right. *(Use the blackboard.)*

7. Let us tarry for a few more moments at the Last Supper. Do you know what Jesus gave us that holy night? What Christ did on that occasion, that the priest continues to do at the Holy Sacrifice of the Altar. At the Last Supper was celebrated the *First Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.* Jesus said: "Take ye and eat; drink ye all of this!" Then the Apostles received as food Christ's Flesh and Blood. That was the *First Holy Communion.* Finally the Lord spoke another great word: "Do this for a commemoration of Me." At that moment the Apostles were made priests. That was the *First Holy Ordination to the Priesthood.* And so we have in that holy night a threefold gift of love from Christ. How can we ever thank Him sufficiently for it! *(Use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

1. Paschal Lamb—type of true Paschal Lamb—Christ.
2. Washing of feet—sign of humility—example for us—reminder of worthily preparing for Communion.
3. Institution of Eucharist:
   a) Christ took bread—"This is My Body;"
   b) Christ took wine—"This is My Blood."
4. Last Supper—Apostles present—Holy Thursday night (5).
6. Promise—"The bread, which I will give," etc.; Fulfilment—"That is My Body." etc.
7. Last Supper: a) First Holy Mass;
   b) First Holy Communion;
   c) First Ordination to Priesthood.

Synthesis. What you have heard today you ought never to forget. Think of that again and again, when

you are with Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament. First Christ celebrated the pasch with His Apostles. How is the paschal lamb a type of the Paschal Lamb, Jesus Christ?—Why did Jesus wash the feet of His disciples?—When did Christ institute the Holy Eucharist?—How did He institute it?—What promise was fulfilled at the Last Supper?—What threefold gift did we receive at the Last Supper?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. The paschal lamb was a type of the Divine Paschal Lamb, Christ. Just compare in your Bible History the two pictures: In the Old Testament we have the celebration of the pasch, in the New Testament the institution of the Holy Eucharist. What is similar in these pictures?—In the one picture we see in the middle the father of the family, in the other picture we see Christ. The father of the family has the family gathered about him, Christ has His disciples gathered about Him. In the first picture the paschal lamb lies upon the table and all eat of it, in the other picture are Christ's Body and Blood:—therefore the real Divine Paschal Lamb. And all the Apostles eat of it. Do you see? There we see the type, here the fulfillment.

2. On Holy Thursday Jesus gave us the Most Blessed Sacrament. We cannot celebrate the memory of this divine gift of love on Holy Thursday. And why not?—Holy Thursday is a day of mourning; no joy can arise within our hearts. How could we be glad, when we think of Christ's sufferings! Therefore the Church has instituted a special feast to honor the Holy Eucharist—Corpus Christi. That is a great day of joy for us. Then we accompany Jesus in prayer and sing triumphantly about the Church (and in the streets).

3. Now children, look at this picture! *(Show if possible a large colored picture.)* You see Jesus in the midst of His disciples. He is holding bread in His

venerable hands, and raising His eyes to Heaven, He is just speaking the sacred words: "This is By Body. This is My Blood!" But His disciples are gazing with wonder at their Master. Look at this picture and sing together the beautiful hymn: *(The catechist will assign an appropriate hymn in honor of the Holy Eucharist.)*

LESSON XXIX

Transubstantiation.

Catechetical Unit:

1) What happened when our Lord said: This is My Body; this is My Blood? L. XXII, Q. 242.
2) How was the substance of the bread and wine changed into the substance of the Body and Blood of Christ? L. XXII, Q. 247.
3) What is this change of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of our Lord called? L. XXII, Q. 246.
4) Did anything remain of the bread and wine after the substance had been changed into the Body and Blood of the Lord? L. XXII, Q. 244.
5) What do you mean by the appearances of bread and wine? L. XXII, Q. 245.
6) What is the Holy Eucharist? L. XXII, Q. 238.

Preparation. Dear children, let us go in spirit to Mount Sion in Jerusalem. A confusion of houses and walls and chapels covers the height. A round tower stands out prominently, a Turkish minaret; for the holy mount is in the hands of infidels. We enter into the yard through a high door, which is half walled up. We ascend a little stairs and come into a large room, fifty feet long and about thirty feet wide. The ceiling is held up by two columns. This is the Supper-room, though, of course, it is no longer as it formerly

used to be. How desecrated and neglected is not that sacred sanctuary! How it pains every true Christian to the depths of his soul! *(The catechist might show the pupils a large picture of the room. A steropticon view is very serviceable also.)* You know what a great event happened there on the first Holy Thursday night. Let us first review this teaching. *(Question the pupils briefly on the preceding lesson.)*

At the Last Supper occurred the First Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and also the First Holy Consecration. Then a wonderful change took place. Just think of Moses! At God's command he approached Pharao and said: "Let My people depart!" The king refused, saying: "I will not let the people depart!" Then Moses threw down his staff upon the ground and it became a serpent. Do you see? From a thing without life it became a living thing. That was a wonderful change. The staff, or as we may also say, the substance of the staff, was changed into the serpent, or into the substance of the serpent. Do you know of any other wonderful changes?—What happened at the wedding feast at Cana?—

Aim. Now let us look at *the change, which took place at the first holy Consecration* in the Supper-room in Jerusalem. It is a great mystery.

Presentation. Let us first briefly relate again the celebration of the Last Supper; then we shall consider the mystery of the first holy Consecration.

Explanation. 1. Now pay strict attention to what Jesus said and did. Jesus took into His sacred and venerable hands bread, blessed, broke and gave it to His disciples with the words: "Take ye and eat. This is My Body!" What has Jesus now in His hands?—St. Augustine once said: "At the Last Supper Jesus carried Himself in His hands." So it is. What then did the Apostles eat?—Not bread, but rather the Body of Christ. You see, therefore, that from bread was made something entirely different—Christ's Sacred Body.

A wonderful change took place then: the bread itself, the substance of the bread, was changed into the Body of Christ, into the substance of Jesus' Body. What happened, therefore, at the moment of holy Consecration? **When our Lord said: This is My Body, the substance of the bread was changed into the substance of His Body.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

In the same manner Jesus took the chalice of wine, blessed and gave it to His disciples, saying: "Drink ye all of this. This is My Blood!" What did the Apostles now drink?—They did not drink wine, but rather the Blood of Christ. You see again, that from the wine was made something entirely different—Christ's Precious Blood. A wonderful change took place at that moment: the wine itself, the substance of the wine, was changed into the Blood, the substance of the Lord's Blood. **When our Lord said: This is My Blood, the substance of the wine was changed into the substance of His Blood.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

2. But *how* could from bread and wine be made Christ's Body and Blood? That happened in a mysterious manner: the eye could not see it and the mind could not understand it. We must humbly believe this mystery. We can also easily believe it; for we know: "Nothing is impossible with God." This wonderful change is a work of the almighty power of God. Let us remember then: **The substance of the bread and wine was changed into the substance of the Body and Blood of Christ by His almighty power.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Even in nature there are many mysteries. The farmer sows his seed. What happens?—Soon it begins to sprout; a little shoot springs up and becomes a blade and brings forth fruit. We see that every year. Who can explain it?—That happens in a very mysterious manner in the workshop of nature. Or consider the vine. It absorbs the rain and changes it into the

precious wine. A mystery! We eat and drink. What happens to the food and drink?—They are changed into our flesh and blood. Thus there are many mysteries of God's nature. If we do not understand even these many natural mysteries, how can we understand the great mystery of the holy Consecration, by which bread and wine are changed into Jesus' Body and Blood? Lord Jesus, we believe!

3. Do you know what we call this wonderful change, that takes place in holy Consecration? We said, that the bread, or the substance of the bread, and the wine, or the substance of the wine, are changed into the very Body and Blood of Christ, into the substance of Jesus' Body and Blood. You see, then, that there is a change of one thing, or substance, into another thing, or substance. We call this wonderful change by the long word "transubstantiation" *(use the blackboard.)* This is a Latin word. It is made up of the two words "substantia" (substance) and "trans" (into). Therefore it means the change of one substance into another substance. Our Catechism says: **This change of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of our Lord is called Transubstantiation.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

4. Now I should very much like to know: What shape or appearance did the Body and Blood of Christ have?—Just suppose, that one of the Apostles, for instance the doubting Thomas, was not present at the first holy Consecration, when that wonderful change took place. Now he enters the room and also receives Holy Communion. The others say to him: "You have received the Body and Blood of the Lord." What do you suppose that he would have answered?—I do not believe it; why it was bread and wine! What can you say to that?—The Apostle really did receive the Body and Blood of the Lord; but Christ's Body and Blood looked like bread and wine, had the appearance of bread and wine. The substance of the bread and wine was changed, everything else remained: what the eye

sees (the form and color), what the hand feels, what the ear hears (the breaking of the host), what the taste and the smell perceive. All that which the senses perceive, we call for short the *appearances.* Jesus wanted the appearances to remain, for they are the outward signs of this holy Sacrament.

Now you can easily understand the answer of the Catechism. **After the substance of the bread and wine had been changed into the substance of the Body and Blood of our Lord there remained only the appearances of bread and wine.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* **5. By the appearances of bread and wine I mean the figure, the color, the taste and whatever appears to the senses.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

6. Now one more question to see, whether you can think: What is the Holy Eucharist?—You have already heard: the bread is changed into the true Body and the wine is changed into the true Blood of Christ. Therefore the Holy Eucharist is *the Sacrament, which contains the Body and Blood of Christ.* In the church you see over the tabernacle a large crucifix. Is that Christ really and truly?—No, that is only a picture of Christ. But in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar there is not only a picture of Christ, but Christ is really and truly present. Not the dead Christ, but the living Christ, with His Body and Blood, *with His soul and Divinity,* as God and as man. Christ is substantially present there.

But how is Christ there in the Blessed Sacrament? —He has not His real appearance, but He is, as it were, hidden under strange forms, or appearances: Jesus is there *under the appearances of bread and wine.* Yes, the same Jesus, Who as a little child lay in the crib, Who tarried with His disciples at the Last Supper, Who hung dying on the cross, is really and truly and substantially present in the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.

Now let us say the entire answer of the Catechist together: **The Holy Eucharist is the Sacrament which contains the Body and Blood, the soul and Divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the appearances of bread and wine.** *(Use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

Transubstantiation (3):

1. Bread and wine—Christ's Body and Blood.

2. Change of bread and wine into Christ's Body and Blood—a mystery—by God's almighty power.

3. After transubstantiation—appearances of bread and wine.

4. Appearances—figure, color, taste, smell.

5. Holy Eucharist—Sacrament containing Christ's Body, Blood, Soul, Divinity—under the appearances of bread and wine.

Synthesis. Let us put all that together briefly: The Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, or the Holy Eucharist, is the true Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, Who is really and truly and substantially present under the appearance of bread and wine. What happened to the bread, when Jesus spoke over it the words: "This is My Body?"—What happened to the wine, when He said over it the words: "This is My Blood?"—How did this miracle happen?—What do you call this wonderful change?—After these words of Jesus what was left over of the bread and wine?—What do you mean by the appearances of bread and wine?—What is the Holy Eucharist?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. In the Holy Eucharist are Christ's Body and Blood. Immediately before the promise of this great Sacrament Jesus in a wonderful manner multiplies the bread and feeds the hungry multitudes. That was consecrated bread; for Jesus had blessed it.

Is the Holy Eucharist also only blessed, or consecrated, bread?—On the feast of St. John, the Apostle, it is the custom in certain places to bless wine and to give it to the people with the beautiful words: "Drink the love of St. John!" Is there also after the Consecration only blessed wine in the chalice?—I know of a certain picture: The priest is standing at the altar and is just celebrating the holy Consecration. On the altar there is a crucifix; from the wound in Jesus' side there flows a stream of blood into the chalice of the priest. What teaching is contained in that picture?—After holy Consecration there is in the chalice the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ.

2. But why does Jesus hide Himself in the Blessed Sacrament? Why may we not see Him?—For two reasons in particular: (a) *We ought to believe firmly in the Holy Eucharist* and thus earn Heaven for ourselves. The Apostle Thomas did not want to believe in the Resurrection of the Lord. He said: "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe" (John xx, 25). Soon afterwards the Risen Saviour appeared to him and said: "Thomas, bring hither thy hand and put it into My side!" Then the doubter cried out: "My Lord and my God!" But Jesus said to him: "Because thou hast seen Me, Thomas, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen and have believed!" To believe what we see and understand, that is not to believe; but to believe what we do not see and understand, that will some day bring a reward in Heaven—(b) *We ought to come to Jesus with childlike trust and confidence.* Jesus is now transfigured. Now just imagine: Suddenly the tabernacle opens and a Sacred Host comes forth and becomes bigger and bigger like a large white cloud; a wonderful splendor shines forth from Jesus. How would we poor sinners feel at that sight? Our hearts would tremble; our eyes would grow blind and we could not bear the sight of Jesus. But

Jesus does not want us to come to Him with fear and trembling, but with childlike trust and confidence. We may speak to Him as a friend to a friend, as a child to its mother. Therefore Jesus hides himself from our eyes.

3. Jesus is there in the Holy Eucharist. Thus do we believe, even though we may not see Him. This Faith makes us rich and happy. But we ought to awaken this Faith as often as we visit Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. "O my Jesus! I firmly believe, that Thou are present in the Holy Eucharist, with Thy Body and Blood, Thy soul and Divinity. In this Faith will I live and die. O Jesus, increase my Faith!" *(Practice this prayer with the children).* Let us now sing a hymn in honor of the Blessed Sacrament!

LESSON XL.

The Power of Consecration.

Catechetical Unit:

1) Is there after the Consecration no longer bread and wine on the altar? (Deharbe)
2) Does this change of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ continue in the Church? L. XXII, Q. 248.
3) When did Christ give His priests the power to change bread and wine into His Body and Blood? L. XXII, Q. 249.
4) When do the Bishops and priests exercise this power? (Deharbe)
5) How do the priests exercise this power of changing bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ? L. XXII, Q. 250.

(N. B. At the beginning of each hour of instruction a hymn in honor of the Blessed Sacrament is sung, so that the children may be put into the proper disposition.)

Preparation. Dear children, the Saxon Duke, Wittekind, once secretly entered as a beggar into the army

headquarters of Charles the Great. It just happened to be Easter. But he was soon recognized and was led to the Emperor. Charles asked him what he had seen. Then the pagan answered: "Two days ago I saw you sad. I was astonished, for I could not understand what a mighty Emperor could be sad about. (It was on Good Friday, and the Emperor was mourning over the Passion of Christ.) This morning I saw that you were still downcast. But when in the church you approached the altar, your face beamed with joy. I wondered even more, when I noticed, that all, who went to the altar, received from the hand of the priest a wonderfully beautiful little child. At some the little child smiled, but from others he turned away with sorrow. But I did not know what that meant." The Emperor replied: "A great grace has been given to you; you have seen what none of us, not even the priest, was permitted to see." Soon afterwards Wittekind received Holy Baptism.

Why did that pagan become converted?—By a miracle he was privileged to see the living Christ Child in the Holy Eucharist, and therefore he became a Christian. You all already know: Christ is really and truly and substantially present in the Blessed Sacrament. Let us review that teaching. *(Question the pupils briefly on the preceding lesson.)*

Jesus Himself celebrated the first holy Consecration. Now we priests perform that each day in the Holy Mass. Did you ever watch the priest carefully?—

Aim. I am going to tell you: *how the priest performs holy Consecration.* Then we shall learn: *whence the priest has received the power of Consecration.*

Presentation. When the moment of holy Consecration approaches, a little bell is rung as a sign. Everything becomes quiet in the church and all the people look towards the altar. The priest takes the bread (the Host) into his consecrated hands, raises his eyes to the picture of the crucified Christ on the altar,

bows his head, to give thanks to God, blesses the bread and says over it the sacred words: "Take ye and eat. This is My Body." Then he immediately bends his knee in adoration and raises the Sacred Host for adoration. The server gives a sign with the little bell, and the people make the sign of the cross, strike their breast and say: "Hail! Thou true Body of Jesus Christ. In deepest reverence we adore Thee. O Jesus, for Thee I live! O Jesus, for Thee I die! O Jesus, I am Thine in life and in death!"

In like manner the priest also takes the chalice with wine, gives thanks again, blesses it and speaks over it the holy words: "Take and drink ye all of this. For this is the chalice of My Blood of the new and eternal testament, which shall be shed for you and for many unto the remission of sins. As often as you do these things, you shall do them in remembrance of Me." Again the priest bends his knee and raises the chalice. The little bell sounds again and all the people adore, saying: "Hail, Thou precious Blood of Jesus Christ! In deepest reverence we adore Thee. O Jesus, be merciful to me! O Jesus, give me Thy grace! O Jesus, forgive me my sins!" The holy Consecration is over.

Explanation. 1. Now I ask: What is on the altar after the Consecration? — Before the Consecration there was bread and wine on the altar, after the Consecration Christ's Body and Blood are there. For at the moment when the priest says: "This is My Body," the bread is changed into Christ's Body; and when the priest says: "This is My Blood," the wine is changed into Christ's Blood. The bread ceases to be bread and the wine ceases to be wine. Of course, what the eye sees still seems to be bread and wine; but it is only the appearance of bread and wine. Everything is just as it was at the first holy Consecration at the Last Supper. That is an important truth, which we believe, but do not understand: *After the Consecration there is on the altar the true Body and Blood of Jesus Christ*

under the appearance of bread and wine. (Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)

2. You see, therefore, that what Jesus Himself once did at the Last Supper, He continues to do in His Church through His priests. He changes the bread and the wine into His own Body and Blood by speaking and acting through His priests, His ministers. **This change of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ continues to be made in the Church by Jesus Christ through the ministry of His priests.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. But you will perhaps wonder, that the priest can perform such a great miracle. Where did the priest get this power?—Of himself the priest cannot do it; for he is only a weak man. Neither is the priest worthy to perform the holy Consecration; for he is nothing but a poor sinner. This power the priest has from Christ. Just recall the words of the Lord, which He spoke to His Apostles immediately after the first holy Consecration: "Do this in commemoration of Me!" Who can explain those words?—Jesus means to say: What I have just done, that you too ought to do. I have changed bread and wine: so you also ought to change bread and wine. I have given My Body and Blood as Communion: so you too ought to give Christians this food for their souls. Therefore the power of changing bread and wine comes from Christ Himself. —**Christ gave His priests the power to change bread and wine into His Body and Blood, when He said to the Apostles: Do this for a commemoration of Me.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

"Do this for a commemoration of Me!"—a few brief words, but truly great words! However, with God many words are not necessary. God said: "Let there be light!" and light was made. Jesus said to the man, who lay in his sick-bed for thirty-eight years: "Arise, take up thy bed and go into thy house!" and at once

the poor man arose and was cured. Jesus called into the grave: "Lazarus, come forth!" and the dead man arose and lived. So Jesus spoke the short words: "Do this in commemoration of Me!"—and the Apostles were made priests (and Bishops) and could perform holy Consecration. These words were Christ's last will and testament; thereby He established all the Masses to the end of the world.

3. Soon the Apostles did what Jesus had commanded them: they changed bread and wine and gave Holy Communion to the Faithful. But the time came, when the Apostles died. Did the power of holy Consecration also die with them? — That cannot be. For Jesus wanted to leave a memorial of Himself, not only to the Apostles, but to all who believe in Him and love Him. He made His last will and testament for all times. Therefore the Apostles ordained other worthy men to be Bishops and priests and gave them the power of Consecration. Yes, *the power of changing bread and wine into Christ's Body and Blood passed from the Apostles to the Bishops and priests. (Repeat together.)*

4. Thus has it continued throughout all the centuries; and thus will it continue, until Christ comes again. I too have the power of holy Consecration; I received that power at my ordination from the Bishop. As often as I stand at the altar and celebrate Holy Mass, I do what Christ once did. I am there in Christ's stead and I speak in His name the holy words: "This is My Body—This is My Blood!"—**The priests exercise this power of changing bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ through the words of Consecration in the Mass, which are the words of Christ: This is My Body: This is My Blood.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

1. After Consecration—Christ's Body and Blood.
2. Consecration continues—by Christ through His priests.

3. Power of Consecration—(a) from Christ—"Do this," etc.; (b) Bishops and priests; (c) in Holy Mass.

Synthesis. What happened once at the Last Supper is renewed each day in our churches—holy Consecration. Did Christ give to His Apostles also the power of changing bread and wine?—When?—To whom did that power pass?—When do the Bishops and priests exercise that power?—What is on the altar after the Consecration? — *(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. I show you two pictures: in the one you see Christ at the Last Supper, in the other a priest at holy Consecration. Compare the two pictures—What Christ once did at the Last Supper that same thing the priest does at holy Consecration. There is only *one* difference: Christ performed holy Consecration by His own power, the priest does it by the power, which he has from the Lord Jesus.

2. Holy Consecration is a very wonderful mystery; we cannot understand it. In a little book, which is worth its weight in gold—"The Imitation of Christ"—we read: "He that meditates too curiously on God's Majesty will be crushed by its glory." Do you understand those words?—If a person looks too long into the light of the sun, he becomes blinded; for the eye cannot stand the strong bright light. So, too, if a person looks too long into the mystery of holy Consecration, his understanding becomes crushed, as it were; he can easily lose the light of Faith. Therefore we read further: "Go with a simple and undoubting Faith, and with reverence to the Blessed Sacrament. What you cannot understand, leave to Almighty God in confidence. He becomes deceived, who believes too much of his own powers." Here again let us excite in ourselves holy Faith: "O my Jesus! I firmly believe, that

Thou art present in the Holy Eucharist, with Thy Body and Blood, Thy Soul and Divinity. In this Faith will I live and die. O Jesus, increase my Faith."

3. The Holy Eucharist has a number of names. From now till the next class you ought to think about what each name means.

a) *The Sacrament of the Altar:* This Sacrament is prepared on the altar in Holy Mass, is preserved on the altar, is exposed on the altar.

b) *The Most Blessed Sacrament:* None of all the Sacraments is so holy. In all the other Sacraments we receive only the grace of Christ, but in this Sacrament we receive Christ Himself.

c) *The Last Supper:* Jesus instituted this Sacrament at the Last Supper and gave it to us on that occasion.

d) *The Table of the Lord:* Whoever communicates, is invited to the table of the Lord. Christ Himself is the host and guest of our soul.

e) *Corpus Christi:* That means the Body of Christ, not the dead Body, of course, but the living Body.

f) *Communion:* That comes from the Latin language and means "union." Why? You will hear of that later on.

g) *Viaticum:* That means: strength or food for the journey into eternity—for those who are dangerously ill and dying.

h) *Eucharist:* That is Greek and means "thanksgiving." Jesus thanked God before holy Consecration. We also ought to thank God, especially after Holy Communion.

i) *Bread of Angels:* May the Angels perhaps receive this heavenly bread? No, only we have that good fortune. But we ought to be as pure as the Angels.

LESSON XLI.

The Real Presence.

Catechetical Unit:

1) How long does Christ remain present with His Sacred Flesh and Blood? (Deharbe)

2) Is Jesus Christ whole and entire both under the form of bread and under the form of wine? L. XXII, Q. 243.

3) When the priest breaks or divides the Sacred Host does he also break or divide the Body of Christ? (Deharbe)

Preparation. Dear children, in a picture over a certain altar we see the Apostle Peter. He is just celebrating holy Consecration; for from his mouth come the words: "This is My Body." At that moment the Infant Jesus comes down from Heaven into the Sacred Host. But on the steps of the altar the other Apostles are kneeling, and further back men and women and children from all countries. Over the whole scene an angel soars and is blowing a trumpet. From the mouth of the trumpet come the words: "Do this for a commemoration of Me!"—What does that picture teach?—Holy Mass is the Lord's Supper and is to be celebrated each day among all peoples to the end of the world. We all know that already; let us now repeat it. *(Question the pupils briefly on the preceding lesson.)*—After holy Consecration Christ is on the altar. But now the question arises:

Aim. *How long and how is Christ present?* Let us think about that now. What you will hear is indeed truly wonderful and mysterious; we cannot understand it, but we must humbly believe it.

Presentation. A Mass is just being celebrated, at which the children are to receive Holy Communion. On the altar next to the chalice there is also the ciborium with little hosts. The Offertory is already

over. The little bell rings three times for the Sanctus. The priest prays silently for a while: It is the Memento or the remembrance of the living. Then again the bell rings—for holy Consecration. The priest uncovers the ciborium, takes the large host into his hands and speaks the holy words: "This is My Body." In the same way he speaks over the chalice the sacred words of Consecration: "This is My Blood." All the children adore. Again there follows a silent prayer—the Memento or remembrance of the dead. Then the priest begins to pray aloud. "Pater noster — Our Father." Immediately after that he takes the Sacred Host and breaks it into two parts; but a little particle he lets fall into the chalice. Soon the little bell is heard for the third time: It is Holy Communion.

After the Communion of the priest the Communion of the children takes place. The children approach the Lord's Table devoutly and with folded hands. The priest uncovers the ciborium, takes a little Host out and shows it to those, who are to communicate, and says: "Ecce Agnus Dei—Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world!" Then three times in turn he says: "O Lord! I am not worthy, that Thou shouldst enter under my roof, but speak the word only, and my soul shall be healed!" Then all receive Holy Communion. As soon as Holy Communion is over, the priest places the ciborium with the remaining Hosts into the tabernacle and locks the little door.

Explanation. 1. From the Sanctus to the Communion is the most sacred part of Holy Mass. Do you know why? Jesus is present in Holy Mass from the Consecration to the Communion inclusively. But you have just heard: After the Communion the ciborium with the little Hosts is preserved on the altar. For then Jesus really and truly dwells there in the tabernacle! So it is. As long as the appearances of a Sacred Host are present, so long is Christ present. But if the appearances cease, then the presence of

Christ also ceases. If a Sacred Host were to burn and become ashes, or by being preserved too long, were to corrupt, it would no longer be Christ's Body. Let us remember, therefore: *Christ remains present with His Sacred Flesh and Blood as long as the appearances of bread and wine continue to exist. (Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

2. In Holy Mass the priest changes first the bread and then the wine. At Holy Communion he receives first the Body of Christ and then the Blood of Christ. When you go to Holy Communion the priest gives you only the Sacred Host; you may not drink from the sacred chalice. But are you not thereby the loser? Do you not fall short?—The priest receives neither more nor less than you. Why? Because in the Sacred Host the entire Christ is present with His Flesh and Blood, His soul and Divinity, as God and man; it is the same Christ, Who is now transfigured in Heaven.—In the early Christian ages even little infants were allowed to receive Holy Communion. But they did not receive the Sacred Host, but rather a few drops from the chalice. And yet they received the entire Jesus; for Christ is whole and entire; He is not divided. Where Christ's Blood is, there also is His Sacred Body. Thus does the Church teach. **Jesus Christ is whole and entire both under the form of bread and under the form of wine.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* That is indeed a great mystery; but it is the truth and therefore we believe it

3. You have heard, that after the Pater noster the priest breaks the Sacred Host into two parts; then he also breaks off a little particle and places it into the chalice. What might that mean?—The breaking of the Sacred Host ought to remind us of the fact, that at death Jesus' Body and Soul were divided or separated. But does not this breaking hurt Jesus? There can be no question of any such thing; for the priest does not break Christ's Body, but only the appear-

ances. Moreover, the glorified Body of Christ can no longer feel any pain.—But I have another doubt: After the breaking of the Sacred Host is Jesus only half present in the sacred Host? Or is Jesus present only in one particle and not in the other?—No, Jesus is present whole and entire in each part of the Sacred Host. Thus too does the Catechism say: *When the priest breaks or divides the Sacred Host, he does not break or divide the Body of Christ, but the appearances only: the Body of Christ itself is present in each part, entire and living, in a true though mysterious manner. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Christ is whole and entire in the whole Host and whole and entire in each part of the Host: that of course is above our understanding. But I will try to make it a little easier for you to understand. Just listen to a parable; Here are three sisters. They are coming home hungry from school. The mother takes a piece of bread and cuts it into three parts, a small piece for each child. The parts are now indeed smaller than the whole piece, but each child has bread. When the priest breaks the Host, the parts are indeed smaller, but each part is the Body of Christ.—Another example: You have a mirror and look into it; you see your face in it. Now I break the mirror into three pieces. You look into it and in each piece you see your face. If I lay the three pieces together; you see your face again, but only once. Now let us apply that to the Sacred Host. In the whole Host Christ is present whole and entire. The priest breaks the Sacred Host into three parts. Now Christ is present in each part, whole and entire. At Holy Communion the priest eats two parts, and yet he receives Christ only once.

(N. B. The catechist might bring a large host into the school and show the breaking of the host in an objective manner. A profanation is not to be feared.)

Write on the blackboard:

1. Christ present—as long as the appearances are present.

2. Christ whole and entire—in each appearance.
3. Christ whole and entire—in each part.

Synthesis. What you have heard today is indeed something truly wonderful. How long is Christ present in the Most Blessed Sacrament? — How long is Christ present in Holy Mass? — Is there under the appearance of bread only the Body of Christ, and under the appearance of wine only His Blood present? —When the priest breaks the Sacred Host, does he break or divide also Christ's Body?—*(Have the children read the answers from the Catechism. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. *Christ is present in the Sacrament as long as the appearances are present.* Do you also know now, why a light burns before the tabernacle? This light burns night and day and therefore is called "the eternal light." It keeps the guard of honor, as it were, for Jesus. Once a wonderful star led the three holy kings, or wise men, to Bethlehem. It halted over a certain house as though it wished to say: The Christ-child is here. So now the eternal light announces: Here in the tabernacle is Jesus, the light of the world; come, let us adore Him!

Do you also know why we Catholics have such beautiful churches? There are churches, that have cost many millions of dollars—the Church of St. Peter at Rome, the Cathedral of Milan, the Cathedral of Cologne. Is not that a waste of money? No, nothing is too beautiful and nothing is too costly for Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament.—At Holy Mass Jesus is present on the altar from the Consecration to the Communion. Pious Christians pray on their knees during this time out of reverence for Jesus.

2. *Christ is whole and entire under each appearance.* Formerly those, who communicated, were allowed to drink also from the chalice. Now they are only allowed to communicate under one form. Protestants say, that

is not right. Why, do you suppose, has the Church done away with the chalice for the ordinary faithful? —Many Christians were unwilling to drink from a common chalice; they had a nausea for that. Then also the Precious Blood was often spilled and thereby dishonored. But the Church wishes thereby especially to profess, that Christ is also present whole and entire under *one form or appearance.*

3. *Christ is whole and entire in each part.* Have you ever watched the priest at Holy Communion? Before he consumes the Precious Blood, he first gathers carefully the little particles with the golden paten (plate), those particles, which may have fallen from the Sacred Host. Why that care?—In each particle, even the smallest ones, Jesus is present whole and entire; therefore not a single one may be lost.—Sometimes it happens, that a person, who is dangerously ill, cannot swallow any longer. Then the priest does not give him an entire Host, but only a small particle; but that sick person has received Christ whole and entire.

4. Let us now sing together a hymn in honor of the Most Blessed Sacrament!

LESSON XLII.

Adoration of the Holy Eucharist.

(Supplementary)

Catechetical Unit:

What does the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist require us to do? (Deharbe)

Preparation. Dear children, let us first review the last lesson. *(Question the pupils briefly on the foregoing lesson.)*—Jesus Christ is God; therefore we adore Him. As the Divine Child lay in the crib, hosts of Angels soared down from Heaven and sang to Him

their songs of praise. Soon the pious shepherds came from the distant fields; they too knelt down and adored the beautiful, heavenly Child. Later on the three wise men came from the East; they fell down before that Child and adored Him. What did the Apostle Thomas do, when the risen Saviour appeared to him?—He also fell at Jesus' feet and called out to Him in adoration: "My Lord and My God!" When Christ will come some day as Judge, all the peoples will fall down before Him and adore Him. Wherever Jesus is, there we must adore and honor Him. But you know: Jesus is present really and truly and substantially in the Holy Eucharist. Therefore we owe Jesus in the Holy Eucharist adoration and honor.

Aim. That is what I would like to show you today a little more in detail: *how we ought to honor and adore Jesus in the Holy Eucharist.*—Rudolph of Hapsburg was a noble, knightly prince. But he was also a pious Christian and a great venerator of the Holy Eucharist. A very beautiful poem is related about him. The poet Schiller has composed that story in verse. Listen!

Presentation.

Forth to the chase a Hero rode,
To hunt the bounding chamoise-deer;
With shaft and horn the squire behind; —
Through greensward meads the riders wind—
A small sweet bell they hear.
Lo, with the Host, a holy man,—
Before him strides the sacristan.
And the bell sounds near and near.

The noble hunter down-inclined,
His reverent head and soften'd eye,
And honor'd with a Christian's mind
The Christ who loves humility!
Loud through the pasture, brawls and raves

A brook—the rains had fed the waves,
And torrents from the hill.
His sandal shoon the priest unbound,
And laid the Host upon the ground,
And neared the swollen rill!

"What wouldst thou, priest," the Count began,
As marvelling much, he halted there.
"Sir Count, I seek a dying man,
Sore—hungering for the heavenly fare.
The bridge that once its safety gave,
Rent by the anger of the wave,
Drifts down the tide below.
Yet barefoot now, I will not fear
(The soul that seeks its God, to cheer)
Through the wild wave to go!"

He gave that priest the knightly steed,
He reach'd that priest the lordly reins,
That he might serve the sick man's need,
Nor slight the task that Heaven ordains.
He took the horse and squire bestrode;
On to the chase the hunter rode,
On to the sick the priest!
And when the morrow's sun was red,
The servant of the Saviour led,
Back to its lord the beast.

"Now Heaven forfend," the Hero Cried,
That e'er to chase or battle more
These limbs the sacred steed bestride
That once my Maker's image bore;
If not a boon allowed to thee,
Thy Lord and mine its Master be,
My tribute to the king,
From whom I hold, as fiefs, since birth,
Honor, renown, the goods of earth,
Life and each living thing!"

(Translated by Edward, Lord Lytton.)

Explanation. Did you understand the meaning? A priest carries the Holy Eucharist to a sick man. The sacristan walks ahead. Then Count Rudolph hears a little bell ring. Immediately he interrupts the hunt, descends from his horse and uncovers his head. Why? —He does that out of reverence for Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament. More than that, he bows down to the earth. Why does he bend his knee?—To bend the knee means to adore. Just recall Moses in the desert! When he neared the burning thorn bush, he heard the voice of God. Immediately he threw himself upon his face. Thus, too, did Rudolph genuflect before Jesus. He was indeed a mighty prince. But he knew that before Jesus even the great king is only small and poor and sinful; for Jesus is the King of Heaven and earth.

Immediately after that we see even more clearly Rudolph's humble and believing heart. The priest was about to wade through the swollen brook. But the noble prince would not permit that. At once he gave him his horse, so that the dangerously sick man might be able to receive the heavenly bread before he died. A beautiful service of love! But even more beautiful is that which happened the next morning.— Filled with gratitude the priest brought the horse back to its master. However, Rudolph did not want to accept it any more, but gave it as a present to the priest for the sacred service. What did he say so beautifully?—"Now Heaven forfend, that e'er to chase or battle more these limbs the sacred steed bestride, that once my Maker's image bore!" Thus does a prince honor the Most Blessed Mystery. His example ought to be for you too a model for imitation. Let us remember, therefore: *The Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist requires us to adore Him with the most profound humility and awe, and with the most ardent love and gratitude. (Repeat together.)*

Application. Let us apply at once what we have just heard. I ask: How ought we to show Jesus in the Holy Eucharist our adoration and honor?

1. When you come into the church immediately greet Jesus in the Holy Eucharist and genuflect reverently. At the same time you might pray quietly: "Blessed and praised every moment, be the most holy and divine Sacrament!" *(Illustrate and practice with the children.)*

2. During holy Consecration you ought always to kneel. At that moment the holy Angels hover about the altar and adore the hidden Saviour. Join with the Angels and say devoutly: "Hail! Thou true Body of Christ. In deepest reverence I adore Thee. My Lord and my God!"

3. Sometime or other you might happen to know, that the priest is carrying the Blessed Sacrament to the sick or dying. Then think of the noble Count Rudolph of Hapsburg and bend your knee, or at least bow your head, and say: "O Jesus, for Thee I live. O Jesus, for Thee I die. O Jesus, I am Thine in life and in death!" Jesus will bless you for that.

4. Each year in our diocese we have what is called the service of the "Forty Hours Adoration." What does that mean?—It is a devotion in which for forty hours continuous prayer is made before the Blessed Sacrament exposed on the altar. Where it is possible those prayers are said also during the night. This devotion is kept up in a succession of churches, so that when it ends in one church it is begun in another, and thus it is perpetual, as it were. That is a beautiful custom. But for parishioners it is a matter of honor to come and adore Jesus, to beg His pardon for sin and to satisfy Him for all the dishonor and neglect he has to suffer in the Blessed Sacrament. This devotion is a picture of and a preparation for the unending adoration of Heaven. In certain convents the holy religious have "Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament" night and day. What joy that must give to Jesus in the Holy Eucharist!

5. Jesus is always present in the Blessed Sacrament. That is a love, of which we are not at all worthy. And

yet, there are Christians, who have no love at all for Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. Christians, who give bitter pain to Jesus by their misuse of His Holy Name! Many curse so terribly, that one would almost imagine, that lightning must come from Heaven and crush them. Surely, there is none of you that does that! And if you happen to hear others cursing, give satisfaction to Jesus for that by humbly praying: "Blessed and praised every moment, be the most holy and divine Sacrament!"

6. Just one thing more I want to impress on your hearts. You have already received Jesus in Holy Communion and rejoice over that blessing. But please Jesus and come very often to visit Him. Let there not be a single day, in which you do not pay a little visit to Him in the Blessed Sacrament! But what should you say then? I will tell you now:

Write on the blackboard:

Visit to the Holy Eucharist.

a) Genuflection—"Blessed and praised," etc.

b) Sign of the Cross—"O Jesus, for Thee I live," etc. Sign of the Cross.

c) Faith and Adoration—"O my Jesus! I firmly believe, that Thou art really and truly and substantially present in the Blessed Sacrament. O Jesus, in this Faith I will live and die. Increase my Faith!—In deepest reverence I adore Thee. O Mary, my Mother, come and help me pray and adore! You Angels and Saints in Heaven, come and help me adore: Blessed and praised every moment be the most holy and divine Sacrament!"

d) Contrition—"O Lord, I am not worthy, that Thou shouldst enter under my roof, but speak the word only, and my soul shall be healed!" (Three times.)

e) Desire for Jesus (spiritual Communion) — "Jesus, Jesus, come to me!"

f) Greeting to Mary—"Remember most gracious Advocate, that never was it known, that any one that fled to Thee and sought Thy intercession, was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence I hasten to Thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother; to Thee do I come, before Thee do I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word made flesh, do not despise my petition, but in Thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen."

g) Sign of the cross—"O Jesus, for Thee I live," etc.

h) Genuflection—"Blessed and praised," etc.

(Just as soon as the children have learned these prayers by heart the catechist ought to lead them to the church and practise with them in common.)

LESSON XLIII.

The Graces of Holy Communion.

Catechetical Unit:

1) What is Holy Communion? L. XXIII, Q. 253.

2) How are we united to Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist? L. XXIII, Q. 252.

3) Why did Christ institute the Holy Eucharist? L. XXIII, Q. 251.

Preparation. Dear children, we ought to rejoice that our dear Lord is pleased to remain with us in the Holy Eucharist. From His throne in the tabernacle on the altar He invites us all, saying: "Come to Me, all you that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you" (Matt. xi. 28). O! how we ought to reverence and adore Jesus really and truly present in the Holy Eucharist! Let us review what we learned of that in the last class. *(Question the pupils briefly on the foregoing lesson.)*—When promising us the Holy Eucharist Jesus said: "My Flesh is meat indeed and My Blood is drink indeed." He did not, of course, mean

food for the body, but rather food for the soul. When Jesus instituted the Holy Eucharist He said: "Take ye and eat: This is My Body. Drink ye all of this: This is My Blood." Then the Apostles ate the true Body of Jesus Christ and drank His real Blood. That was the first Holy Communion. Therefore **Holy Communion is the receiving of the Body and the Blood of Christ.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)* Christ is really and truly and substantially present in the Holy Eucharist. Therefore Holy Communion is really and truly the receiving of Jesus' Body and Blood for the nourishment of our souls. But there is also a *spiritual Communion*—the desire and longing for Jesus; but that is not real Holy Communion. We are not now speaking of spiritual Communion, but of the receiving of the real Body and Blood of Jesus Christ for the nourishment of our souls.

But dear children, why does Jesus want to give us Himself in Holy Communion? Just think of it: The All-Holy One comes to a poor sinner! What love! Do we need Jesus so badly?

Aim. That is what I want to teach you today: *Why Jesus comes into our heart. What graces He brings to us in Holy Communion.*—But first I will relate to you about the First Holy Communion of St. Aloysius.

Presentation. Aloysius was already twelve years old. His heart indeed glowed with love for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament; but as yet he had not been allowed to receive Jesus. One day St. Charles Borromeo, the great Archbishop of Milan, came. Aloysius visited him and laid his heart open to him. The Saint asked the little boy: "Have you already received your First Holy Communion?" The boy replied: "No, but I am waiting with longing and desire to receive Holy Communion." "Well, then, prepare yourself," said the Bishop," and I myself will give it to you." That was for Aloysius like a message from Heaven. He could

scarcely wait for that day of joy, so great was his longing for Jesus.

Immediately Aloysius began with all zeal to prepare himself. He prayed more than usual and visited Jesus often in the Blessed Sacrament, and purified his heart by a humble and contrite Confession. At last the long desired day arrived; it was a happy day for the whole family, but most of all for Aloysius himself. The great moment was at hand. Piously like an Angel the boy approached the Lord's Table. All, who saw him, were deeply moved and edified. But when Aloysius had the Lord in his heart, he was as happy as though he were already in Heaven.

Of course, Aloysius still had some bad inclinations in his heart; the inclination to follow his own will especially caused him much trouble. However, all these wicked inclinations became weaker from one Holy Communion to another. Greater and greater his zeal and love for Jesus grew. His soul was like a flower, which under the warm rays of the sun became more and more beautiful and sent forth a delightful odor. God was his greatest joy and God was pleased with him.

Two years later Aloysius went as a page to the royal court of Spain. How easily he might have fallen in the midst of the dangers of court life! But there, too, he preserved his innocence as pure as a lily—by the power of Holy Communion. Soon afterwards Aloysius dedicated his young life entirely to God and became a simple, poor brother in a religious order. But the tender strength of his life was soon spent. With touching devotion the Saint received Holy Viaticum. Then he waited with joy for death; for he knew: I have Jesus in my heart and soon I will be allowed to see Jesus in the glory of Heaven! *(Show the children a large picture of Aloysius' First Holy Communion.)*

Explanation. 1. Aloysius was all filled with joy and happiness at his First Holy Communion. Tell me,

why?—He knew: Now Jesus dwells in my heart. Yes, the little room of his heart was really a little kingdom of Heaven. Why then ought he not to feel happy! More than that. When we eat food, it is changed into our flesh and blood. Whoever receives the Sacred Body and Blood of the Lord in Holy Communion, becomes one with Christ; becomes related with Jesus, as it were. The Lord Himself has said that: "He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood, remains in Me and I in him!" Therefore Aloysius was united most closely and intimately with Jesus; yes, he could say in all truth: "O Jesus, Thou art mine, and I am Thine!" Or as St. Paul once said: "I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii, 20). That is the first great grace of Holy Communion: **Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist to unite us to Himself and to nourish our soul with His divine life.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

2. The very word "Communion" tells us that; for Communion means union. Our Catechism says: **We are united to Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist by means of Holy Communion.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. Jesus is the All-Holy One. Whoever wishes to receive Him must also be holy. What, therefore, did Aloysius do on the eve of his First Communion-day?—He purified his heart in the Sacrament of Penance; then he went to Holy Communion. Jesus, of course, gladly came to him. But Jesus never comes with empty hands; He always brings a Communion gift with Him. What might that be? Just recall how Jesus was once transfigured on Mount Thabor. A heavenly ray of light shone through His Body. Moses and Elias were also transfigured by that light from Heaven. So, too, it is in Holy Communion. Some of the beauty and holiness of Jesus passes over into the soul. And by it the soul becomes more beautiful and holy; sanctifying grace is increased in the soul. That is the second effect of Holy Communion: **it increases**

sanctifying grace in our soul. *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Even before his First Holy Communion Aloysius was very good and pious. After Holy Communion his zeal for God and for all that is good and holy became greater and greater. Whatever pleased God—to pray, to go to church, to fast, to obey, to study—all this also pleased Aloysius. Now whence did he get the strength and the love to do these things?—At each Holy Communion Jesus gave him new graces, and so he became strong in doing good, in practicing virtue.—An ill-nourished child is weak and is not inclined or disposed to work; but a well-nourished child is strong and loves to work. So, too, it is in regard to Holy Communion. If the soul is fed and nourished again and again with Holy Communion, it becomes stronger and stronger and gets a greater desire and love to work for God and for Heaven. Such a child grows in all the virtues. That is the third reason, why Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist: **to increase all virtues in our soul.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

4. Aloysius was already indeed a little Saint. But he still had his evil inclinations. To what was he especially inclined?—Where there is a stubborn will, there one finds it especially hard to obey. But tell me: whence come these evil inclinations? — Every child brings them with him into the world; they are an evil inheritance from our first parents. Of course, these evil inclinations are not sins; but they easily lead to sin; neither do they die entirely, until we ourselves die. But there is an efficacious medicine against this sickness of the soul. You have heard how these evil inclinations became weaker and weaker in Aloysius; finally he overcame them easily; it was like play for him. How was that possible?—Frequent Holy Communion is a very wonderful medicine. That is the third reason why Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist: **to lessen our evil inclinations.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

5. But Holy Communion has another even greater power. Aloysius was at the court of the King of Spain for a time. He was a page at the royal court. There many dangers threatened him. Many a one had already lost his innocence; but Aloysius lived as pure as an Angel. The wicked example of his companions did not affect his soul at all; the poisonous breath of sin did not harm his soul in the least. How was that possible? How could he preserve his heart pure from mortal sin?—His means of protection was frequent Holy Communion. Now do you suppose, that a person, who all during his life had been nourished and fed with that wonderful bread from Heaven in Holy Communion, will be buried in Hell?—No indeed; for Holy Communion guarantees eternal life to the soul. That is the fourth effect of Holy Communion: **it is a pledge of everlasting life.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* Just think again of that woman, whom Jesus allowed to touch the hem of His garment. A heavenly power streamed forth from Jesus and cured her. So also the soul in Holy Communion receives a new heavenly power, which will preserve it from mortal and even venial sin, and thus make it safe for Heaven.

6. Most people have a dread and a fear of death. Not so Aloysius; he rejoiced at the thought of death. But how could he feel happy?—He had often received Holy Communion. But Jesus Himself has assured us: "He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood, hath everlasting life and I will raise him up on the last day." (John vi, 55.) Surely that is a very consoling promise. Who can explain it?—Jesus promises us resurrection and eternal life; and He has given us the pledge and guarantee—Himself in Holy Communion. Do you now understand the joy of Aloysius at his death?—That is the fifth reason why Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist: **to fit our bodies for a glorious resurrection.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

7. Such are the wonderful graces of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, or Holy Communion. No won-

der that Aloysius became a Saint!—But Jesus instituted the Holy Eucharist for another very important reason. Tell me: What happened on the cross on Mount Calvary?—Jesus offered His Body and Blood as a sacrifice to God for our sakes. Now Jesus wanted us always to remember that great sacrifice. He wanted that sacrifice to continue in His Church to the end of time. But how could that be?—Jesus died only once; He could not die again. He Himself told us how that could take place. At the Last Supper Jesus spoke the words: "Take ye and eat. This is My Body, which shall be given for you. Drink ye all of this. This is My Blood, which shall be shed for you. Do this in commemoration of Me!" Do you see? At the Last Supper the first Holy Mass was offered to God, and in the Mass Jesus continues the sacrifice of the Cross, as we shall see more in detail later on. Meanwhile let us remember: **Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist to continue the sacrifice of the Cross in His Church.**

(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)

Write on the blackboard:

1. Holy Communion—the receiving of Jesus' Body and Blood.

2. The Holy Eucharist:

Sacrament:
- a) unites us to Christ and nourishes our soul with Divine life (through Holy Communion);
- b) increases sanctifying grace and all virtues;
- c) lessens our evil inclinations;
- d) is a pledge of everlasting life;
- e) fits our body for a glorious resurrection;

Sacrifice:
- f) continues the sacrifice of the Cross in the Church (through Holy Mass).

Synthesis. Great and wonderful are the graces of Holy Communion. With what words did Jesus promise Holy Communion? — How did Jesus institute Holy Communion?—What is Holy Communion?—How does the Holy Eucharist unite us with Jesus?—Which are the graces of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, or Holy Communion?—For what other very important reason did Jesus institute the Holy Eucharist?—You see, therefore, that the Holy Eucharist is a *Sacrament* (Holy Communion) and a *Sacrifice* (Holy Mass.) *(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. *Holy Communion unites us most intimately with Jesus Christ.*—The pious shepherds were allowed to look upon the Divine Child and to adore Him and rejoiced over it. Old Simeon was permitted to take the Child Jesus into his arms and press Him to his heart. He was so happy over that, that he prayed aloud: "Now dost Thou dismiss Thy servant, O Lord, according to Thy word in peace!" John, the beloved disciple, was allowed at the Last Supper to rest his head on the bosom of Jesus. We may do much more than that: we may receive Him into our hearts and become one with Him; we may receive Him as our food and drink, so that we may grow more and more into the image of Jesus. "O Jesus, for Thee I live. O Jesus, for Thee I die. O Jesus, I am Thine in life and in death!"

2. *Holy Communion increases sanctifying grace and all virtues*—What Sacraments have the same power?—But none of the other Sacraments increases grace so much; for in Holy Communion the Author of grace comes into our heart.—Here is a child, that has no liking for prayer, for study, for obedience, for kindness. Let that child pray with all its heart at Holy Communion. Soon a change will take place. Holy Communion makes the weak strong, lazy people diligent in virtue and the Christian life. St. John Chrys-

ostom says: "Holy Communion changes those, that before were fraid, into lions."

3. *Holy Communion lessens our evil inclinations.*—Many a child gets angry at once, is stubborn, disobedient, is inclined to take things secretly from home or even to be immodest—all evil inclinations. Such a child is sick in its soul. If it desires to get well, the best means is to receive Holy Communion. St. Francis of Sales was by nature very angry and passionate; however, he became as meek as a lamb. How was that possible?—He himself once told the reason; it became possible for him only through Holy Communion.

4. *Holy Communion is a pledge of everlasting life.*—Enemies once wanted to storm the convent of St. Clare. Deadly fear fell upon the whole community of nuns. Only Clare remained calm. In her most dire need the Saint came out with the Blessed Sacrament in her hands and showed it to the enemies. And behold! struck with terror, as though overcome by an invisible enemy, the infidels betook themselves to a hasty flight. The Holy Eucharist is the terror of the wicked enemy. What will Satan do, if he sees Jesus in our heart? Surely he will not dare to harm us. And thus Jesus in the Holy Eucharist is the pledge of everlasting life.

5. *Holy Communion fits our bodies for a glorious resurrection.*—Many a Christian asks anxiously: What will happen to me at death? I wonder whether I will go to Heaven? Most certainly; just receive Holy Communion very frequently in life. Jesus has given His word for that.

6. You will perhaps ask:—*How often ought I to receive Holy Communion?* Jesus did not determine that, but only said: "Amen, I say to you: Unless you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, you will not have life in you." What the Church demands strictly, you all know.—The early Christians went to the Lord's table every day. Our Holy Father wishes that also. Therefore come often, very often, at

least every week or two. Love to come to Jesus in Holy Communion, and Jesus will delight to come to you; but prepare your hearts like St. Aloysius!

LESSON XLIV.

Unworthy Communion.

Catechetical Unit:

1) What is necessary to make a good Communion? L. XXIII, Q. 254 (first half).

2) Does he who receives Communion in mortal sin receive the Body and Blood of Christ? L. XXIII, Q. 255.

3) Does everyone receive in Holy Communion the graces it is intended to give? (Deharbe)

Preparation. Dear children, when promising the wonderful bread from Heaven Jesus also said: "He that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me" (John vi, 58). Those are golden words indeed. Who can explain them?—Jesus means to say: Whoever receives Me in Holy Communion, will live and remain in My grace and someday will live eternally in Heaven. Holy Communion is like a divine seed, which is placed in the soul and springs up and produces fruit for eternal life. You heard of that in the last lesson; let us review it. *(Question the pupils briefly on the preceding lesson.)*—

But now a question: Does Holy Communion always work so wonderfully in the soul? Does every one also receive the graces of Holy Communion? Yes, if he receives worthily; no, if he communicates unworthily.

Aim. We are going to learn about that today: *about an unworthy Communion.* They are serious words, which I have to speak to you today; for I would not like to see even one of you ever receive

Holy Communion unworthily. First I shall tell you about an unhappy First Communicant.

Presentation. The beautiful day of First Holy Communion was come. The sky was clear and the sun shone so bright and warm, as though it also wished to rejoice with the First Communicants. But for one child it was a day of terror. In solemn procession the children were led into the church. Joy and happiness beamed from every face. Only *one* child appears troubled and downcast. The Holy Sacrifice begins. The children pray and sing like Angels. They can hardly wait for the hour, when Jesus will enter into their heart. The priest preaches a short and fatherly instruction. Many parents and children are almost moved to tears. Now Holy Communion begins.

Slowly and reverently the Communicants approach the Lord's table. Already a large number have received the Sacred Body of the Lord. When suddenly a child at the altar-rail is seen to fall to the floor, as soon as it had received the Sacred Host. Some men lift up the child: it is stiff and cold like a corpse and seemingly without life. They carry the body to a nearby house and do all they can, to help the child. The priest comes at once to visit the child. He calls it by its name, but gets no answer. At last the child opens its pale lips and cries out so loud, that all who are present hear it: "I have committed a sacrilege. I have received Holy Communion unworthily!" Then the unhappy child turned to the wall and died.

Explanation. 1. Children, would one of you like to die like that?—If so your First Holy Communion-day would be the most unhappy day of your life. You prefer to receive Holy Communion always like good Communicants, do you not? The other children were so happy and glad; joy just beamed from their faces. They had every reason to rejoice; why?—When Jesus dwells with us, our heart is like a little kingdom of Heaven, and there Jesus distributes His Heavenly

gifts. But whoever wants to receive these gifts must first prepare his heart. But perhaps even among those First Communicants there were many, that had grievous sins upon their soul; but none of them wanted to approach the table of the Lord with sin. What did they do, in order to communicate worthily?—First a worthy Confession, then a worthy Communion! Remember that well: **To make a good Communion it is necessary to be in the state of sanctifying grace.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)* Yes, if we have committed a grievous sin, we must make a good Confession before we receive.

St. Paul says that expressly: "Let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of the chalice" (I Cor. xi, 28). "To prove himself"—what does that mean?—The Apostle means: Examine your conscience thoroughly and if you find a grievous sin, first purify your conscience in Holy Confession. Then come and receive the wonderful bread from Heaven. The All-Holy and All-Pure One wants to enter only into a pure and holy heart. Where there is a pure heart, there too, is there a worthy Communion. But you must not understand that in the wrong way. We are really never worthy to receive the All-Holy One; yes, not even the Angels are worthy of that. But if the heart is pure, at least from every mortal sin, then Jesus will come with His grace. And the purer the heart, the richer the graces.

2. But what if a person communicates with mortal sin? One of the children did that. It went indeed to Holy Confession with the other children. But that foolish child concealed a mortal sin, most likely some impure sin. And why?—The child was ashamed to tell that sin sincerely. Of course, its conscience did not give it any peace; and therefore on the way to church it appeared so downcast and disturbed. But the blinded child no longer listened to its conscience. With mortal sin in its heart that child went to the

Lord's table and received its First Holy Communion unworthily. The Judas act!

Judas carried about with him in his heart the intention of betraying the Lord. Nevertheless he went to the Last Supper. He pretended to be all innocent, and even permitted Jesus to wash his feet. Once more the dear Saviour warned him: "One of you is about to betray Me!" But he asked boldly: "Lord, is it I?" The miserable hypocrite! Whoever communicates unworthily, does the very same thing. Just look at that First Communicant! It went to the Table of the Lord with the other children, just as though it were pure and innocent like them; and yet, it carried sin in its heart. What hypocrisy! Do you see the Judas-act?—Then Judas went out to the garden of olives, approached Jesus and kissed Him, saying: "Hail, Master!" That was a sign of betrayel. For he had agreed in advance with Jesus' enemies: "He whom I shall kiss, He it is!" Then they fell upon Jesus and led Him away to death. Thus did Judas do violence to his Master. It is enough to terrify one, when one thinks of it. And the First Communicant? Its sin was just like the sin of Judas. Why? Jesus gladly enters into a pure heart; but into an impure heart He does not want to enter at all. But this child was so bold and wicked and compelled Jesus to enter into its detestable, sinful heart. Therefore it committed a sacrilege — the Judas-act — a terrible sin! **He who receives Communion in mortal sin receives the Body and Blood of Christ, but does not receive His grace, and he commits a great sacrilege.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. But the *punishment* followed immediately upon the sin. What happened?—Scarcely had the child received Holy Communion, when it fell to the floor. The Holy of Holies became deadly poison, as it were. The child continued to live, as though God wanted to give it a last chance of grace. Again a moment of consciousness returned. But what must we hear?

The unhappy child speaks its own condemnation: "I have committed a sacrilege. I received Holy Communion unworthily knowingly and willingly!" Then the child dies in its sins and—one cannot say it without trembling—goes into damnation. That was the punishment for an unworthy Communion. *He who receives Holy Communion unworthily—that is, in the state of mortal sin, brings damnation upon himself. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* Thus also does St. Paul teach: "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself." (I. Cor. xi, 29). It is enough to terrify one, when one hears these words. What does the Apostle mean to say?—He that communicates unworthily and dies in that state, does not need the judgment any longer: that unworthy Communion is his death sentence to eternal damnation.

Write on the blackboard:

1. Before Holy Communion—the state of grace—(a worthy Confession).
2. Unworthy Communion—sacrilege—Judas-act.
3. Unworthy Communion—eternal damnation.

Synthesis. Holy Communion can bring you an eternal blessing or an eternal curse. You see that from today's story. Does every one receive with Holy Communion also the graces of Communion?—What does St. Paul say of an unworthy Communion?—What kind of a sin does he commit, who receives unworthily?—What, therefore, must one do before Holy Communion, if one has grievous sin?—What does St. Paul demand before Holy Communion?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. Great are the graces of a worthy Communion; but terrible are the results of an unworthy Communion. Just let us compare the bless-

ings of a worthy Communion with the evil consequences of an unworthy Communion.—A worthy Communion unites us most closely with Christ; an unworthy Communion unites us with Satan. Of Judas it is said: "Satan entered into him" (John xiii, 27). Those words are true also of every Judas-soul; Satan obtains power over that heart. A worthy Communion increases sanctifying grace; an unworthy Communion increases God's displeasure and makes the soul more deserving of condemnation in God's sight. A worthy Communion lessens our evil inclinations; an unworthy Communion nourishes and increases our evil inclinations. A worthy Communion inclines and strengthens the soul for good and for all virtues; an unworthy Communion chokes all those inclinations. A worthy Communion purifies the soul from venial sins and preserves the soul against mortal sins; an unworthy Communion burdens the soul with a new mortal sin and hardens it in sin. A worthy Communion is a pledge of a glorious resurrection and life everlasting; an unworthy Communion is a pledge of eternal damnation.

2. St. Thomas Aquinas once gathered that all together into a few verses:

"Good come, bad come,
Alike have they taken;
But how different the bread!
To the evil it becomes punishment and Hell,
To the good their salvation's fount,
To these life, to them death."

I ask you, children, which do you want? You have the choice: Life or death, Heaven or Hell! You all want eternal life, do you not? If so, resolve at once: I will always make a good Confession before Holy Communion. But at Holy Communion pray, when you have Jesus in your heart: "My Jesus, rather let me die than receive Thee unworthily even once in my life!" The Divine Saviour said at the Last Supper:

"Woe to the man through whom the Son of man is betrayed! It were better for him, that he had never been born!" Thus, too, would one have to say of a Communicant, who would receive the All-Holy One unworthily: Woe to that child! It were better, if it had never been born. You do not want that. Let us, therefore, pray together (when we visit the Blessed Sacrament), that all of you may always receive Holy Communion worthily.

LESSON XLV.

Preparation for Holy Communion.

Catechetical Unit:

1) Is it enough to be free from mortal sin to receive plentifully the graces of Holy Communion? L. XXIII, Q. 256.
2) Does venial sin also render our Communions unworthy? (Deharbe)
3) What is necessary to make a good Communion? L. XXIII, Q. 254 (second half).
4) What is the fast necessary for Holy Communion? L. XXIII, Q. 257.
5) Is any one ever allowed to receive Holy Communion when not fasting? L. XXIII, Q. 258.

Preparation. Dear children, we learned about the evil of an unworthy Communion in the last lesson; let us review this. *(Question the pupils briefly on the preceding lesson.)*—When the Bishop comes for Holy Confirmation, the church is decorated in festive attire; all the bells ring and the choir sings: "Ecce sacerdos magnus—Behold the High Priest comes!" Reverence for the Bishop demands that. When the President comes to a city, a festive reception is prepared for him. The whole city is bedecked in gala attire; everywhere there are wreaths and flags and decorations.

Reverence for the President requires that. When Christ like a King entered into Jerusalem, all the people hastened to meet Him. Many carried palm-branches in their hands, others spread their garments on the ground and cried out: "Hosanna to the Son of David!"—In Holy Communion Jesus comes to you; He dwells in your heart. What ought you to do?—Body and soul need a festive garment. Reverence for the Blessed Sacrament demands that.

Aim. I must tell you more about that: *about the preparation for Holy Communion.* First I shall tell you again about St. Aloysius.

Presentation. St. Charles Borromeo himself wanted to give St. Aloysius his First Holy Communion. But first he admonished him: "Prepare your heart!" Aloysius carefully obeyed all that the Bishop had urged him to do; with redoubled zeal he assisted at Holy Mass each day and again and again he prayed: "My Jesus, give me grace, to receive Thee worthily!" Each day he also made a special visit to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. The last days before Holy Communion he was almost constantly in thought with Jesus in the tabernacle. All his thoughts and speech turned about Holy Communion. Finally the happy day came.

Earnestly Aloysius examined his conscience and then he went to Confession. He had only a few sins and only a few little faults, but he repented of them so heartily, that he shed bitter tears over them. On the vigil of that day he also for love of Jesus kept a fast; he took only a little nourishment, so that he might be able to stand the fast the next day. Half the night he spent in prayer. His first thought and greeting in the morning belonged to Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. Then he knelt before the crucifix and said his morning prayers. However, that was not enough for him as yet; he also meditated for a whole hour on the

love of Jesus in the Holy Sacrament. Now his heart was ready to receive the heavenly guest.

Aloysius put on his best clothing; then he went to church with his parents. During the Holy Sacrifice he was all devotion. The people imagined, that they saw a praying Angel, so lively was his Faith in Jesus' Presence in the Blessed Sacrament. "O my Jesus! I believe in Thee; in deepest reverence I adore Thee. O my Jesus! I hope in Thee and I love Thee. O my Jesus! I am not worthy; but I am sorry for my sins. O my Jesus! Come to me." Those were his prayers before Holy Communion. Now the long desired moment was come. The All-Holy One entered into the heart of the little Saint. Aloysius was happy.

Explanation. 1. Like Aloysius you also ought to prepare your heart. A person in mortal sin must confess before Holy Communion; you know that. Aloysius had no mortal sin, but only some venial sins. He could, therefore, quietly have gone to Holy Communion without Confession; for *venial sins do not make Holy Communion unworthy. (Repeat together.)* However, he first went to Holy Confession and told all to the confessor. And while doing that he was so much in earnest and felt so sorrowful at heart, that he even had to weep. But tears of sorrow act like a second Baptism: they wash the soul clean from sin. You see, then, that Aloysius did all he could, in order to purify his heart from even the smallest stains of sins. That is right. **To receive plentifully the graces of Holy Communion it is not enough to be free from mortal sin, but we should be free from all affection for venial sin.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

But why purify the heart also from venial sins? Aloysius did it out of reverence for Jesus. For Jesus is the All-Pure One and the Holy of Holies; therefore He detests all, even the smallest sins. The Blessed Sacrament is preserved in a precious, golden vessel; the

heart of the Communicant ought also to be a precious, golden vessel. But Aloysius did it also out of love for his own soul. For the purer the heart, the richer the graces of Holy Communion; the more unclean the heart, the less the graces of Holy Communion. Remember, then: *venial sins diminish the graces, which our Communion would otherwise produce. (Repeat together.)* Here it is often like on the sky. If the sky is covered with clouds, the sun's rays can not shine through properly; and if the soul is stained with sins, the rays of Jesus' grace cannot break through properly. But if the sky is clear and pure, there is warm sunshine; and if the soul is free from sin, Jesus comes into it with richest graces.

2. We can learn something more from Aloysius. Scarcely had the Bishop promised him Holy Communion, when he was filled with holy zeal. How do we know that?—Each day he assisted at Holy Mass; each day he visited Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. The nearer the great day approached, the greater was his desire for Jesus. He spoke scarcely of anything but Holy Communion. And how did he spend the night before his First Holy Communion-day?—Do you see? So great was his zeal. But early in the morning he arose and for a whole hour thought of the love of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. Thus did he try to awaken in his heart the proper fervor and devotion. But during the celebration of Holy Communion he was entirely absorbed in God. That is the proper preparation. *The Communicant should try to excite in his heart sentiments of fervor and devotion. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. What prayers did Aloysius recite before Holy Communion? In the first place he excited himself to an act of lively Faith in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist, and then he adored Jesus humbly. But no one is pure in the sight of the All-Holy One, not even a Saint. Therefore Aloysius humbled himself before Jesus and again repented of his

sins. But even though we are poor sinners, we may, nevertheless, firmly hope, that Jesus will come to us with His graces. Aloysius hoped for that, too. And Jesus will come all the more willingly, the more we love and desire Him. Therefore Aloysius prayed so fervently: "O my Jesus! I love Thee. O my Jesus! come to me." These are the best exercises before Holy Communion. **We should make acts of lively faith, of firm hope, and ardent love.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

4. You have also heard that Aloysius fasted on the eve of his First Communion-day. That is good for the body and the soul; but it is not a duty. In the evening Aloysius took only a little nourishment, but nothing more until after Holy Communion. For the Church commands, that before Holy Communion we must be fasting perfectly from midnight. Our Catechism says: **To make a good Communion it is necessary to be in the state of sanctifying grace and to be fasting from midnight.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Consequently it is not allowed to take anything as food or drink from the midnight immediately preceding Holy Communion. Whoever by mistake or through forgetfulness has eaten or drunk anything, even though it be ever so little, does not thereby commit sin, but he may not receive holy Communion that day; otherwise his Communion is unworthy—a sacrilege. That is necessary as a preparation for the body. **The fast necessary for Holy Communion is the abstaining from midnight from everything which is taken as food or drink.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

5. Is there any exception to this rule?—Yes; persons who are dangerously ill and who are to receive Holy Viaticum are not obliged to observe the fast. Generally they are unable to fast; consequently the proverb holds good: Necessity knows no law.—**Anyone in danger of death is allowed to receive Holy Com-**

munion when not fasting. Moreover, the Church is a kind Mother; she does not want to hurt us. Therefore she also allows sick persons, who have been sick for a month and who will not get well very soon, to receive Holy Communion once or twice a week, even though they have taken medicine or a little liquid food before Holy Communion.

6. There is one more thing. Whoever is invited to the table of the President, will surely appear clothed in his best dress. At Holy Communion we are invited to the table of the King of kings. Therefore Aloysius appeared in his best Sunday clothing. That also is required as a preparation for the body: *we must be decently dressed. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* Reverence for Jesus demands that much. Surely it would be most unbecoming to go to Holy Communion in a dirty, soiled dress. But a poor dress is not a disgrace. Jesus was also poor, and the poor are His special pets, if only they are good. It would be just as unbecoming to go to the Lord's table in a vain dress. Why the Saviour would have a real nausea for such a person! Jesus was so humble and also wants the Communicant to come to Him humbly, not proud and vain. The principal thing is not the decoration of the body, but the beauty of the soul. God does not look at the body, but at the soul.

Write on the blackboard:

I. Preparation of the soul:

1. The heart—free from venial sins;

2. In the heart—fervor and devotion; faith, hope, love, desire.

II. Preparation of the body:

1. Fasting from midnight—no food or drink;

2. Decently clothed.

3. Exceptions to law of fast—sick in danger of death.

Synthesis. The preparation for Holy Communion must be a double one; a preparation of the soul and a preparation of the body. What must he do, who is in mortal sin?—How else must we prepare the soul? —Do venial sins make Communion unworthy?—What exercises are the best before Holy Communion?— How must we prepare the body?—Are there any exceptions to the law of fast?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. A Communicant has forgotten a sin in Confession.—Afterwards the child thinks of that sin. What should it do?—The child should go to Confession again and tell the sin. But it is not absolutely necessary to do so. At least it ought to feel sorry for that sin and then it may go to Communion quietly. Of course the child must tell that sin in the next Confession.—Another Communicant commits a mortal sin after Confession|—That child may not go to Communion, but first it must go to Confession again.—A third child has omitted several venial sins. —It does not need to be disturbed over that, but it ought to feel sorry for those sins and then go to Communion without any fear.

2. Before Holy Communion you ought to excite in your heart fervent acts of devotion. You might recite the following brief and simle prayers: *(Make use of our leaflet: "A Method of Holy Communion.")*

a) *Faith and Adoration.* O My Jesus! I firmly believe that Thou art really and truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. In this Faith I will live and die. O Jesus! increase my Faith. In deepest reverence I adore Thee! O Mary, my mother, come and help me to adore. All you Angels and Saints of Heaven come and help me to adore! Blessed and praised every moment, be the most holy and divine Sacrament!"

b) Humility and Contrition. "O Lord! I am not worthy, that Thou shouldst enter under my roof. O Jesus! give me Thy grace. O Jesus! be merciful to me. O Jesus! forgive me my sins!"

c) Hope, Love and Desire. "A contrite and humble heart Thou wilt not despise, O Jesus!—My Jesus, my Lord and my God!—Jesus, Jesus, come to me!"

These little prayers you can repeat often slowly and with attention; for they are a good preparation for Holy Communion. As the preparation, so the graces of Holy Communion. Begin now to recite them with all fervor as Aloysius once did. Jesus is already very near and knocks at the heart of each one of you and says: "My child give Me thy heart."

3. A child about to go to Communion rinses its mouth and swallows a drop of water.—A Communicant gets sick; it takes a few peppermints for its stomach. —Some one wakes up in the night and drinks a little water; in the morning that child does not know any more whether it happened before or after midnight.— A child gets the nosebleed and swallows some of the blood.—A child has taken secretly a little piece of candy.—A Communicant asks the priest: "Father, I took a little water today; is that a sin?"—

LESSON XLVI.

The Rite of Holy Communion.

Catechetical Unit:

1) How should we approach the altar-rail in order to receive Holy Communion? (Deharbe)
2) What should we do at the time of our receiving the Sacred Host? (Deharbe)
3) What should we do after Holy Communion? L. XXIII, Q. 261.

(N. B. Have the children make use of our leaflet entitled: *"A Method of Holy Communion."*)

Preparation. Dear children, before God gave the Ten Commandments to the people of Israel, He said to Moses: "Go to the people and sanctify them today, and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments. And let them be ready against the third day" (Ex. xix, 10s). And so it was done. All the Israelites put on their best clothing and prepared for the holy-day. —Communion-day is each time a solemn holy-day. Therefore the Communicant should sanctify himself and clothe himself with proper garments. Thus should he appear at the Lord's table. Reverence for Jesus demands that. We saw that in the last lesson. Let us review it first. *(Question the pupils briefly on the foregoing lesson.)—*

After having considered the preparation necessary for Holy Communion, let us now say a few words about the manner of receiving the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.

Aim. Therefore I shall tell you more in detail now: *how you ought to conduct yourselves when receiving Holy Communion.* For it is necessary to have order during Holy Communion; reverence for Jesus demands that.

Presentation and Explanation.

I. Before Holy Communion.

1. On the day set for Holy Communion, come to the church early, at least a few minutes before Holy Mass begins. Bring your prayer-book with you. During Holy Mass try to pray and sing with the other children as devoutly as the Angels, who pay eternal adoration before God's throne. Read the prayers, that you have learned in the last class: *the acts of faith and adoration, of humility and contrition, of hope, love and fervent desire. (Use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

2. After the priest has received Holy Communion,

the Communion of the people takes place. The priest unlocks the little tabernacle door and takes out the golden ciborium, which contains the Sacred Hosts. Meanwhile the altar-boy arranges the Communion-cloth (or card) on the altar-rail. Arise and go to the altar-rail. But how should you do that?—*We should approach the altar-rail with the greatest reverence, with hands folded and raised, and with eyes cast down. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

When directly in front of the altar-rail, *genuflect* with the right knee to the floor in the direction of the Blessed Sacrament. Then *kneel* on the top step. Take the Communion-cloth (or card) with both hands firmly and hold it under the chin in such a way, that it forms a little table, so that the Sacred Host may not fall to the floor. *(Illustrate.)*

3. Meanwhile the altar-boy recites the *Confiteor*—a public confession of sin. *(Use the blackboard.)* You might recite it quietly with the altar-boy. At least tell God that you are a sinner, no matter what form of words you make use of. Then the priest faces the people. Twice he begs God's pardon for the sins of the people. The first little prayer begins like this: "*Misereatur*—May the almighty God be merciful to you, and forgive your sins and lead you to eternal life." The second prayer begins with the words "*Indulgentiam*—May the almighty and merciful God grant you indulgence, absolution and remission of all your sins!" Confess your sins again to Jesus and make the act of contrition. During the second prayer the priest makes the sign of the Cross over those, who are to receive Holy Communion. All should *bless* themselves at the same time.

4. Then the priest takes a little Host from the ciborium and shows it to the people, saying: "*Ecce Agnus Dei*—Behold the Lamb of God! behold! Who taketh away the sins of the world." In the meanwhile you ought to look at Jesus with a lively Faith and a

childlike trust and confidence. Then the priest continues: *"Domine non sum dignus*—O Lord I am not worthy, that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; but speak the word only, and my soul shall be healed!" The priest repeats that prayer three times. All the people ought to *say it* with the priest *three times and strike their breasts* humbly and contritely at the same time.

5. While you are waiting to receive Jesus, you might recite the following ejaculations with all your heart: "O my God! be merciful to me, a sinner. My Jesus! have mercy on me. My Jesus! I love Thee with my whole heart!"

II. During Holy Communion.

6. When your turn comes to receive Holy Communion, raise your head a little, slowly and quietly, open your mouth moderately, lay your tongue on your under-lip and receive the Sacred Host. You may close your eyes, but it is not necessary; however, do not look into the priest's face, but rather directly before you, or at the Communion-cloth (or card). Remember then: *we should spread the Communion-cloth (or card) over our hands and under our chin, hold the head erect and firm, extend the tongue a little upon the under-lip and then most reverently receive the Sacred Host. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

7. The priest gives you Holy Communion with the words: *"Corpus Domini*—May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve your soul unto eternal life!" You might say the words in your heart. Do you understand their meaning?—Holy Communion is the pledge of eternal life. Formerly the priest used to say: "The Holy of holies!"

8. After the priest has placed the Sacred Host upon your tongue, draw your tongue back slowly, close your mouth, bow your head moderately, and swallow the Sacred Host at once. But do not do it violently and

in such a manner as to attract attention! If the Sacred Particle should adhere to the roof of your mouth, do not touch it with your finger, but loosen it quietly with your tongue. Do not use your teeth upon the Sacred Body of Christ. If the Host should accidentally fall upon the floor, let the priest pick it up.

III. After Holy Communion.

9. After you have received Holy Communion, *arise* quietly, *genuflect* to the Blessed Sacrament, and *return to your place* in the church slowly, with folded hands and eyes cast down. *Kneel down* and begin at once to make your thanksgiving. Do not make use of your prayer-book at once; rather speak to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, heart to heart. The moments immediately after Holy Communion are most precious moments of grace, and you ought to make the best use of them. Our Catechism says: **After Holy Communion we should spend some time in adoring our Lord, in thanking Him for the grace we have received, and in asking Him for the blessings we need.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

If you do not know what prayers to say, just keep on repeating over and over again the little ejaculation: "My Lord and my God!" Jesus will be pleased with your good will.

10. What prayers might you say in particular?—First greet Jesus and adore Him, then thank Him; offer yourselves to Him and pledge your love; finally pray for blessings. I will show you how.

a) *Greeting and Humility.* "Hail! O Jesus, my Lord and my God. Thou art mine and I am Thine! But Who art Thou, and who am I? Thou art the Lord of Heaven and earth, and I am dust and ashes. And yet, Thou comest to me."

b) *Adoration.* "In deepest reverence I adore Thee. O Mary, my Mother, come and help me to adore! All

you Angels and Saints, come and help me to adore! Blessed and praised every moment, be the most holy and divine Sacrament!"

c) *Thanksgiving.* "O my Jesus! how long I have wished for this moment. How I have longed to be allowed to receive Thee into my heart! Thanks be to Thee, O Jesus! a thousand thanks. I will thank Thee with Mary; My soul doth magnify the Lord and my heart rejoiceth in God, my Saviour; for He hath done great things to me, and holy is His Name!"

d) *Offering.* "O my Jesus! Thou hast given Thyself entirely to me. I, too, will give myself to Thee. Accept my body and my soul; accept me whole and entire! O my Jesus! I am Thine for all eternity."

e) *Love.* "O my Jesus! filled with love Thou hast come into my heart. How can I repay Thee this love? I can do nothing except love Thee in return. O my Jesus! I love Thee with all my heart."

f) *Petition.* "O my Jesus! now listen also to my prayers. Thou art with me, O remain with me! Never let me be separated from Thee again. Rather die than sin! I also pray for my parents, and brothers, and sisters, and friends; let them live and die in Thy friendship! Grant, that we all may some day be united in Heaven, to praise and honor Thee for all eternity!"

You may add any other prayers you wish from your prayer-book. Say especially that prayer, to which there is attached a Plenary Indulgence: "Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus!" And five Our Fathers and Hail Marys for the intention of our Holy Father and for the good of the Church. Thus ought you to thank Jesus after Holy Communion. The dear Saviour will surely bless such a Communicant and grant him rich graces.

(N. B. The children ought to be encouraged to recite these prayers regularly and thoughtfully after Holy Communion. Thus they will have a guide as to how to pray and meditate, when Jesus is with them in the Blessed Sacrament. The seed will not fall upon unfruitful ground.)

11. Your thanksgiving after Holy Communion ought to last *at least fifteen minutes.* That surely is not too much for so great a grace. To leave without thanksgiving after Holy Communion is very irreverent and ungrateful. Once St. Philip Neri saw a man, who had just communicated,leave the altar-rail at once and go out of the church. Quickly he sent two altar-boys after that man with burning candles, so that they might accompany him. The man was not a little surprised, and asked: "What do you want?" The boys replied: "Philip has sent us!" Very angrily the man returned and asked the Saint what he meant by that. Philip replied: "My son, when the Body of the Lord is carried to a sick person, a light is carried on ahead; reverence for the Lord demands that. You went away at once after Holy Communion, while Jesus was still in your heart. Therefore it was only proper to send a light ahead." The man must have remembered that lesson all his life. You, too, ought not to forget it.

Write on the blackboard:

I. Before Holy Communion.

a) Acts of faith, adoration, humility, contrition, hope, love, desire.

b) Confession of sin; contrition. Sign of the Cross.

c) Approach altar-rail reverently, folded hands, eyes cast down.

d) Genuflect, kneel—hold Communion-cloth under chin.

II. During Holy Communion.

Extend tongue, swallow Sacred Host at once.

III. After Holy Communion.

a) Genuflect; return reverently; kneel.

b) Prayers: greeting, humility, adoration, thanksgiving, offering, love, petition.

Synthesis. Now you have all the chief points concerning your conduct while receiving Holy Communion. What prayers ought you to say before Holy Communion?—How ought you to approach the altar-rail? —What prayer ought you to say after having received Holy Communion? *(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. This instruction has a thoroughly practical character. Hence the catechist must lead the children into the church and practice everything with them: the prayers, the approach to the Lord's table, the genuflections, the conduct during the reception of Holy Communion and the return from the altar-rail. Only then will there be order and edification.

LESSON XLVII.

Admonition After Holy Communion.

Catechetical Unit:

1) How can we retain the blessings of Holy Communion? (Deharbe)

2) When are we bound to receive Holy Communion? L. XXIII, Q. 259.

3) Is it well to receive Holy Communion often? L. XXIII, Q. 260.

Preparation. Dear children, every good Christian child ought to know how to conduct itself during Holy Communion. We learned of that in the last lesson; let us first review it briefly. *(Question the pupils on the preceding lesson.)*—At Christmas the Christ Child comes only with His gifts; but in Holy Communion the Christ Child Himself really comes to you: your heart becomes a little crib of Jesus. Surely that is a beautiful occasion.

Did you ever hear of the mighty Emperor Napoleon? Once he sat at a joyous dinner with his officers, in order to celebrate a victory. Suddenly a young officer hit upon a remarkable idea. Each one of the guests was to mention which was the most beautiful day of his life. One mentioned this, another that. Now the Emperor's turn came. Napoleon was serious and thoughtful. Then a general said: "Your Majesty is surely in a predicament; for your life is rich in beautiful days." "O no!" said the Emperor; "I know well the most beautiful day of my life. Just guess!" Each one mentioned a different day of victory. "No," said the Emperor; "it is none of these. The most beautiful day of my life was the day of my First Holy Communion." The officers were astonished. But one grey haired general was deeply touched by the words of the Emperor and wiped a tear from his eyes. Napoleon extended his hand to that man and said: "My brave fellow, very good indeed! You alone understand me. I am happy, that at least one among you understands me."

Yes, that was indeed a beautiful day, really the most beautiful day of your life, dear children. For when Jesus came to you for the first time in Holy Communion, He made you rich and happy in your soul. But I wonder whether it will always remain like that? Will you always retain the happiness and blessings of your First Communion-day? You will retain them, if you do what I say:

Aim. *Always continue to be faithful adorers of the Blessed* Sacrament! That is what I am going to tell you.

Presentation and Explanation. 1. a) A certain little child used often to come to the dear Saviour in the church. There it could pray so very piously and fervently. But it had only *one* sorrow in its heart: "Now I have been praying so long and yet, I have never seen the dear Saviour!" And what does that little child do in its holy impatience? It takes a footstool, climbs

upon the table of the altar, raps quietly on the tabernacle door, and asks timidly: "My Jesus, art Thou there?" But in the tabernacle all remains quiet and silent; no answer, as though the dear Saviour had not heard the question at all. *(Show the pupils a large picture of this scene.)*

Children, you do not have to ask: "My Jesus, art Thou there?" You have heard it in the Communion instructions and you believe firmly: Jesus is really and truly present in the Blessed Sacrament! Christ, the eternal Truth, has said so Himself. O Preserve this Faith always in your hearts! *Believe firmly that Jesus is in the Blessed Sacrament! (Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

Do you know what is able to weaken that Faith in your hearts, or what can rob you of it entirely? Sin, and especially impure sins. All of you have already seen a fountain. Bright and clear like crystal the water bubbles forth from the ground; and if the sun shines into the water, one can see every little pebble lying at the bottom of the fountain. But if I stir up the water, it becomes cloudy, and I no longer see anything. So, too, it is in our heart. If the heart is pure, the bright sunshine of grace is there; then it is easy to believe. Then you like to believe in Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. But if your heart is unclean with the filth of sin, it will be hard for you to believe; yes, you can easily entirely lose your Faith in Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. And if your Faith is lost, then all is lost, lost forever.

b) But why is Jesus with us there? He does not need us. No one can compel Him to remain with us. Only love urges Him to be near us always. But how do men return His love? Most of them leave Him alone and do not want to come to Him. That hurts the dear Saviour severely. Once He complained of His Heart's sorrow to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque:

"If only men would return My love with love. But they are so cold and indifferent; and if I invite them to come they do not listen to Me and despise Me."

Children, do you also want to be so unkind? Do you also want to be so ungrateful? No, you do not want to be so ungrateful. No, you do not want to be like that. Well, then, visit Jesus gladly each day, at least for a few moments; surely that is not too much. The good Saviour loves to see children so much and wants ever so much to bless you. Therefore *love to visit Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament! (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*—St. Aloysius was accustomed each time on his way to school first to enter the church and to greet Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. St. Francis Xavier, the great Apostle of the heathens, was often so tired from preaching and working, that he could no longer speak and he could scarcely move his hands and feet. Then he loved most of all to enter the church and spend the entire night with Jesus in prayer. There he obtained new strength again, in order to work for God and for souls.

c) Aloysius used to go to Holy Communion each Sunday. Then his preparation used to last three days: on Thursday he prayed to the Father, on Friday to the Son, and on Saturday to the Holy Ghost for the grace of a worthy Communion. Then he made his act of thanksgiving: on Monday he thanked the Father, on Tuesday the Son, on Wednesday the Holy Ghost for the great grace of Holy Communion. Thus the whole week was for him a prayer and a thanksgiving. Hence I can easily realize, that Aloysius became such a great Saint. I can easily understand, that he lived like "an Angel in the flesh." The strength for that he obtained from the great Sacrament, which "brings forth souls as pure as Virgins."

St. Francis de Sales, too, used to act like Aloysius. At the age of eleven years he was permitted to receive his First Holy Communion. Then he used to go to the

Lord's table every first Sunday of the month, later on oftener, and finally every week. He continued that practice even when a student at Paris. People used to ask: "Why do you go to Holy Communion so often?" But he answered: "Do you not know? I speak often with my teachers, because I can learn from them many things. But Jesus is the Teacher of the science of the Saints. I go to Him, because I want to learn from Him how to become a Saint. For of what use is all learning and wisdom, if I do not also become holy?" Do you see? *Receive Jesus often in Holy Communion! (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Children, you also must become holy; for in Heaven there are only Saints. Therefore receive Jesus often in Holy Communion! Do not forget these three things: *Believe firmly in Jesus in the Holy Sacrament! Love to visit Jesus in the Holy Sacrament! Receive Jesus often in the Holy Sacrament!* Preserve these three precious jewels and you will not easily go astray from the path to Heaven.

2. a) But not all people are as wise and loving as St. Aloysius or St. Francis de Sales. Indeed many do not have much Faith in Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Many never think of visiting the Lord Jesus in His house. Many come to Holy Communion only once a year, and many alas! even less frequently. Yes, some would not go to Holy Communion for years, if the Church did not remind them of this duty by a special Commandment. Therefore the Church has given us the fourth Commandment, which says: Receive the Holy Eucharist during the Easter time! This Commandment binds all Christians under pain of mortal sin; and this duty begins just as soon as we have attained the use of reason and have been properly instructed in the meaning of the Blessed Sacrament. Our Catechism says: **We are bound to receive Holy Communion, under pain of mortal sin, during the Easter time.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

b) There is one other time, when every Christian, that has the use of reason, must receive Holy Communion, under pain of mortal sin. Do you know that occasion? It is when one is in danger of death. Then surely we need the special help of Jesus; for then the devil makes his last great fight to get possession of the soul. Then every one feels great temptations arise within him. But how can we overcome these temptations and keep our strength, God's holy grace, in our soul, for that last great journey into eternity? The Church has told us how. By receiving Holy Communion, the food and the strength of our soul. Therefore our Catechism says: **We are bound to receive Holy Communion when in danger of death.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Jesus Himself has told us: "Amen, amen, I say to you: Except you eat the Flesh of the Son of man and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you" (John vi, 54). We get this life, indeed, in Holy Baptism, when we are born again as children of God; but we cannot preserve this life without eating and drinking the Body and Blood of Jesus, the spiritual food of our soul. Jesus did not indeed tell us precisely how often we must eat this heavenly food; He left His Church to decide that. And the church has told us in the fourth Commandment, as we just learned.

3. But children, that is *the very least* that every Christian must do, if he wishes to remain a faithful child of God and the Church. A true child of God and His holy Church will not be satisfied with receiving Holy Communion in the Easter time and when in danger of death. That is clear enough. Think of Aloysius and of all of God's most faithful and loving children! They loved to receive Jesus often, as often as possible, in Holy Communion. Our Holy Father, Pope Pius X, "the Pope of the Blessed Sacrament" as he is so lovingly called, because of his fervor and devotion for Jesus in the Holy Eucharist, has told us when we should receive Jesus in Holy Communion.

He wants us to come frequently, every day if possible, to the Lord's table. All that we need is: (1) *the state of grace,* freedom from mortal sin; and (2) *the right intention,* we must go to the Lord's table, not out of routine or vain glory or human respect, but for the purpose of pleasing God, of becoming more closely united with Him in love, and of obtaining the divine remedy for our weaknesses and defects. And can you not fulfil those two conditions easily? Yes, there is not a single child that is not able to keep from mortal sin and come to Jesus with the right intention. And therefore every one of you can receive Jesus as often as you wish—every month, every week, every day, if you will.

If you go frequently to the Lord's table you will easily be able to lead a holy life, for in Holy Communion you receive the very Author of all grace and the Source of all good. Remember then **it is well to receive Holy Communion often, as nothing is a greater aid to a holy life than often to receive the Author of all grace and the Source of all good.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

1. a) Believe firmly in Jesus in the Holy Sacrament!
   b) Love to visit Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament!
   c) Receive Jesus often in the Blessed Sacrament!

2. We *must,* under pain of mortal sin, receive Holy Communion:
   a) during the Easter time;
   b) when in danger of death.

3. We *ought* to receive Holy Communion—often, even daily.

Synthesis. What I have told you today is very important for all of you, without any exception whatso-

ever. Let us review. How can we retain the happiness of our First Holy Communion-day?—How often must we receive Holy Communion, under pain of mortal sin?—How often should we receive Holy Communion?—Why?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. One day when Simon of Montford was busily engaged in the duties of his daily life, a person in great haste came to him, saying: "Oh, come to the church and see the wonderful thing, that has taken place there; Jesus Christ is present in the Holy Sacrament in a visible manner. Oh, come and see how wonderful He is!" Simon answered: "No, I will not go; let those go who have any doubts about His adorable presence in this great Sacrament. As for me, I have no need of any miracle to strengthen my Faith; for I firmly believe that Jesus is there, and nothing, not even a miracle, could make my Faith any stronger." Children, do you also firmly believe in Jesus in the Holy Sacrament? Oh! never weaken that glorious Faith.

2. There lived, not long ago, at Ars, in France, a very poor man, who could not read, and who had to labor all day for the support of himself and his little family. But his heart was full of love for Jesus in the adorable Sacrament. Whether going to his work or returning from it, never did that good man pass the church door without entering to adore our Lord. He would leave his tools at the door, and remain for a short while sitting or kneeling before the tabernacle. The priest, who watched him with great delight, could never see the slightest movement of the lips. Being surprised at this, he said to him one day: "My good father, what do you say to our Lord in these visits you pay Him every day?" "I say nothing to Him," was the answer: "I look at Him and He looks at me." Oh! what simple, beautiful Faith! Children, are you going

to visit Jesus often, at least for a few moments, in the Holy Sacrament?

3. When St. Stanislaus was about sixteen years old he became very ill, and thinking that he was about to die, he asked the master of the house in which he lodged to go for the priest, that he might receive the Last Sacraments before he died. But the man, who was a heretic, would not do this. Stanislaus was grieved beyond measure, and seeing that he could not obtain his request from this man, he had recourse to the Saints, and prayed to St. Barbara, the patroness of a happy death, that she would obtain for him the grace of receiving the Sacraments before he died. His prayer was heard, for God sent two Angels from Heaven to give him Holy Communion. Children, how easy for you to receive Holy Communion often! What do you promise to do in this matter? Resolve to come to Holy Communion at least once a week!

4. After Holy Communion you have prayed: "I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me!" Therefore Jesus lives in you! But children, for God's sake! do not commit any mortal sins any more; otherwise Jesus must die again in your hearts! Children, how long is Jesus to live in your hearts? Only a few days?—No! Until your next Communion?—No! Only until you must die?—No! Jesus ought to live in you, and you in Him—forever!

V.
EXTREME UNCTION

LESSON XLVIII.

Extreme Unction—A Sacrament.

Catechetical Unit:

1) Whence do we know that the Sacrament of Extreme Unction was instituted by Christ? (Deharbe)
2) What is the outward sign of Extreme Unction? (Deharbe)
3) What is the Sacrament of Extreme Unction? L. XXV, Q. 271.
4) Who is the minister of Extreme Unction? L. XXV, Q. 277.

Preparation. Dear children, while our Divine Saviour was still on earth, He was a special friend of the poor sick. He comforted them lovingly and raised them up and healed many in a wonderful manner. You know examples enough of that from the Bible History.—To the man, who lay sick for thirty-eight years, He spoke the consoling words: "Arise, take up thy bed and go into thy house." A centurion (captain) had a sick servant. Jesus said: "Go, be it done as thou hast believed." And in that same hour the sick servant was cured. Once there was a woman in the midst of a crowd. She touched the hem of Jesus' garment. At that moment a wonderful power streamed through her and she was healed. At another time ten lepers came to Jesus and called out beseechingly: "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" And they all were cured and made well.

Jesus no longer dwells visibly on earth. But He has not left the poor sick helpless. He has cared for them very lovingly. He has left behind for us a saving means, a help for body and soul, the holy Sacrament of Extreme Unction.

Aim. We are now going to learn of that in the three following lessons. Today I am going to show you: *Extreme Unction is a true Sacrament.*

Presentation. There will always be sick people. And especially the sick need most of all consolation and help. Jesus knew that very well. Therefore He commanded His Apostles, saying: "Is any man sick among you, let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of Faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him." Our Divine Saviour even gave His Apostles the power of working miracles. Just recall how Peter and John once went into the temple to pray. At the gate of the temple sat a man, who had been born lame and was begging an alms. Peter said: "Gold and silver I have not; but what I have, that I give thee: In the name of Jesus Christ rise and walk!" Then the man jumped up and walked and praised God. The Apostles faithfully carried out the command of their Divine Master; they visited the sick and many were made well again.

The Apostles are dead. But the Holy Unction did not therefore cease. What the Apostles did at the command of Christ, the priests have always done. If there was a sick man anywhere, they went to him, prayed over him and anointed him with oil in the name of the Lord. We have proofs of that in every century. Thus Pope Innocent I (who died 411) admonishes: "The sick are to be anointed with the holy oil of chrism." Pope Gregory the Great (about the year 600) presecribed very exactly, how the oil of the sick is to be consecrated and Holy Unction administered. Later on the holy Council of Trent even solemnly defined: "Extreme Unction is a true Sacrament instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ" (Sess. xiv).

As it was in the days of the Apostles and as it always has been in all times, so it is now. If a believ-

ing Christian becomes dangerously ill, the priest is called in. The priest goes and hears the Confession of the sick person, gives him Holy Communion and administers to him Extreme Unction. He anoints the five senses of the sick person and prays at the same time: "Through this Holy Unction, and His most tender mercy, may the Lord forgive thee whatever faults thou hast committed by sight (hearing, smell, taste, touch, walking)." When finally the last hour approaches, the priest assists the dying person and prays, that his soul may enter into eternity.

Explanation. 1. Extreme Unction is from Christ. Protestants do not believe that. But we believe it. Protestants say: There is nothing about that in the Bible; therefore it is not from Christ. That is true; the Sacred Scriptures do not say anything about *when* Christ instituted Extreme Unction. But this much is absolutely certain—that the Apostles had Extreme Unction. We know that from St. James. He wrote a letter (an epistle), and in it we read: "Is any man sick among you, let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of Faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him" (v, 14, 15).

Therefore there can be no doubt, that the Apostles administered Extreme Unction. From whom did they get the Sacrament?—Evidently from Christ. For St. James says expressly: "Let the priests pray over the sick man and anoint him with oil *in the name of the Lord.*" And again he says: "The Lord shall raise him up, and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him." Whence does the Apostle know that? To raise up and to forgive sins—God alone can do that. Therefore Christ has instituted the Sacrament of Extreme Unction. *We know that the Sacrament of Extreme Unction*

was instituted by Christ from the Holy Scripture. (Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)

2. But even though there was nothing at all in the Holy Scripture about that, we should, nevertheless, know very definitely, that Extreme Unction is from Christ. If outside I see traces of men's feet in the freshly fallen snow, what do I know at once?—That someone has passed by; for otherwise the footprints would not be there. But now we find the traces of Extreme Unction through all the centuries up to the Apostles; what follows from that?—Evidently Extreme Unction must be from Christ Himself. We have already heard some of these proofs.—

Listen to another voice! Venerable Bede lived in the eighth century (he died 735); he writes: "The custom is still in the Church that her priests anoint the sick with consecrated oil." In the East there are Christians, who already in the first centuries separated from Holy Mother Church; and yet, they also have Extreme Unction. Therefore even in those days Extreme Unction was in use. For these hostile brethren surely would not have accepted it any more later on. Moreover, the Church has solemnly declared: "Extreme Unction is a true Sacrament." That is enough for us. What the Church teaches, is always the truth; for through her mouth the Holy Ghost speaks, the Spirit of truth.—Yes, Christ has instituted Extreme Unction: *we know that from the constant teaching of the Church. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. How does the priest administer Extreme Unction?—St. James tells us that: "Let the priests pray over the sick man and anoint him with oil." That takes place outwardly, visibly. Therefore we call the prayer of the priest and the anointing with oil the

outward sign of this Sacrament. *The outward sign of Extreme Unction is the prayer of the priest and the anointing of the sick man with holy oil. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

4. The priest anoints the five senses of the sick man, who is in danger of death. What do you suppose is the reason for that?—Through the senses evil enters into the heart; the senses are, as it were, the instruments of sin. Just think of how much evil is done by means of the eyes, of the ears! All that evil is to be satisfied for again by means of the holy anointing and the mercy of God. Therefore the priest prays: "Through this Holy Unction and His most tender mercy, may the Lord forgive thee whatever faults thou hast committed by sight, hearing!" — At each anointing the priest makes the sign of the cross; for from the cross of Christ comes all mercy and all salvation. Then, too, the person who is dangerously ill ought to be made *interiorly strong* against the devil, especially for the death-struggle. But Satan fears nothing as much as the cross; for on the cross his power was broken and destroyed. Yes, sometimes God even gives *strength and health* to the body of the person in danger of death from sickness. Such are the great blessings and graces that come from the Sacrament of Extreme Unction. *(Use the blackboard, adding No. 3 and 4.)*

5. Now you can easily answer the question: What is Extreme Unction?—**Extreme Unction is the Sacrament which, through the anointing and prayer of the priest, gives health and strength to the soul, and sometimes to the body, when we are in danger of death from sickness.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

6. The oil, which is used in anointing the sick person, is called the oil of the infirm (the sick). It is prepared from olives, the fruit of the olive tree. The Bishop himself consecrates this oil solemnly on Holy

Thursday. In it there is a beautiful and deep meaning. On Holy Thursday Jesus went into the garden of olives, and there the death agony came upon Him. But the heavenly Father sent an Angel, to comfort and strengthen Him. When the danger of death and the death agony seize upon the Christian, the dear God also sends His angel, the priest, to comfort and strengthen the sick man through Extreme Unction. There is, as it were, a grace from the death agony of Christ in the holy Sacrament of Unction. Who then is the minister of this Sacrament?—**The priest is the minister of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

Extreme Unction:

1. Sacrament — Holy Scripture, teaching of the Church.
2. Outward sign—prayer and anointing with oil.
3. Effects—health and strength of soul, sometimes of body.
4. For those in danger of death through sickness.
5. Minister—the priest.

Synthesis. The Catholic Church has always possessed seven Sacraments; to these belong also Extreme Unction. Therefore it is from Christ. How do we know that?—What does St. James say about Extreme Unction?—When did the Church solemnly declare Extreme Unction to be a Sacrament?—How does the priest administer Extreme Unction?—What is the outward sign of this Sacrament?—What prayer does the priest say then?—Who administers Extreme Unction?—What are the effects of Extreme Unction for soul and body?—What is Extreme Unction?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and the blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. Extreme Unction is a true Sacrament. We believe that and are thankful for it. How badly does not a person, who is dangerously ill, need help in the last extremity! But God has so kindly provided for these poor mortals. Here we see again very plainly, that God wants to get us into Heaven at any cost. How many would be lost, if it were not for Extreme Unction! Therefore Extreme Unction is a great grace. You ought to pray for this grace often and fervently. Do it especially each Thursday, so that God may also send to you His angel, the priest, some day, when you are in danger of death.

2. The priest anoints the five senses of the sick person. God has given us the five senses for good, but many misuse them for sin. Does your conscience not reproach you at all in this regard? Did you never look at evil? listen to it? speak it? Did you never do evil with your hands? Did you never run after evil? Remember well: the more you misuse your senses for evil, the more will your conscience oppress you some day at the hour of death. Do you want that? "O merciful God! pardon me, for having so often misused my senses. Henceforth they are to be consecrated to Thy service alone."

LESSON XLIX.

The Graces of Extreme Unction.

Catechetical Unit:

1) Which are the effects of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction? L. XXV, Q. 274.

2) What do you mean by the remains of sin? L. XXV, Q. 275.

Preparation. Dear children, Jesus tells of a man, who while on the way from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among robbers. They struck him, took away everything from him, and left him lying half-dead by the

wayside. A priest, who happened along, saw him and passed by; likewise a levite (a servant of the temple). But a Samaritan saw the poor man lying in his blood and felt sympathy for him. He poured oil and wine into his wounds, brought him to the nearest inn and cared for him.

Just so poor and miserable does a dangerously sick person, too, lie there, often all covered with wounds.—I mean the wounds of the soul, sin. Then a Good Samaritan happens along and pours oil into his wounds.—The priest administers Extreme Unction to the sick person. We have already heard: Extreme Unction is a true Sacrament. Let us first review this. *(Question the pupils briefly on the preceding lesson.)*

Did you ever see a person, who was dangerously ill or dying? What does such a poor person need?—What he needs, that he receives: help for body and soul. What does St. James say?—

Aim. You are going to hear of that today: *What effects Extreme Unction produces. What graces a person dangerously ill receives.* First I will tell you a story from life.

Presentation. A young man was dangerously ill. The sickness grew worse continually. The fever had almost consumed his last life's strength. The doctor, too, declared: "No help is possible here any longer; by tomorrow he must die." He became unconscious from time to time. In his feverish dreams the young man saw terrible pictures. It seemed to him, as though he was lying among nothing but dead persons. Then again the sins of his youth appeared so vividly before his eyes, as though they had happened only today. And a secret voice whispered to him: "You did all those things! I wonder: Will God pardon you?" The death agony laid hold of him.

Well-meaning friends called the young man's attention to his danger. At once he had the priest called.

He confessed as well as he could; but in the midst of his Confession he lost consciousness. Finally all was happily over. Devoutly he received Holy Viaticum and then Extreme Unction. Now he was quiet and comforted; suddenly, as it were, his fear disappeared. He was also prepared to die and prayed: "O God, if it is *Thy* will, I, too, will gladly die." Really it seemed as though his life were about to be extinguished; for his heart beat grew weaker and weaker.

Morning dawned. But behold! suddenly things became easier; new strength of life returned into that mortally sick body. The doctor was all astonished and declared: "The danger is over; his life is saved!" It took only a few more weeks and the sick man arose again and was cured. But that young man wanted to be grateful to God, because He had given him his life for the second time. He consecrated himself to the service of the Lord and became a priest, and in imitation of the Divine Friend of children, he became a special friend of children. Today he still continues to work and labor for the salvation of immortal souls.

Explanation. There you see plainly the power of Extreme Unction. Let us ask first of all: *What does Extreme Unction do for the soul? (Use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

1. This young man was in danger of death. Then he had the priest called. Why?—He wanted to go to Confession and thus prepare himself for death. What does Penance effect?—Penance acts like a wonderful bath and cleanses the soul from sin. If sanctifying grace was lost before, the young man obtained it in Penance again. Then he also received Holy Viaticum. What does Holy Communion effect?—Thus grace was increased in his soul. Finally the young man, who was dangerously ill, also received Extreme Unction. What happened then in his soul?—His soul became

more beautiful in God's eyes; for *Extreme Unction increases sanctifying grace. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

But that is not all. Jesus Christ instituted the Sacrament of Extreme Unction especially to help those, who are dangerously ill. Therefore that young man received *special graces*. Let us now see what they are.

2. A person, who is seriously sick, must generally also suffer a great deal. So it was with the young man of our story. He had no rest day and night. The fever burned within him like a fire. It is not so easy to remain patient in the midst of such *pains*. Then to these bodily pains there were added *sufferings of soul*. Just look at that young man! What did he have to suffer interiorly?—Terrible pictures of the imagination tortured his soul. The vision of his sins made him afraid. No wonder, then, that a deadly fear laid hold of him. Those were indeed severe *temptations*. Where do you suppose they came from?—It was the spirit of darkness, who tortured and tormented the poor soul like that. And generally these temptations become more violent in the death struggle, when the soul gradually tears itself loose from the body. For the tempter knows very well, that now is the decisive moment! The soul belongs either to God or to me. You see now how sick and weak the soul is in that dread hour.

But after Extreme Unction suddenly the sick man became quiet, very peaceful. For St. James says: "The Lord will raise him up." Do you see the power of this Sacrament? It excited in that you man a great confidence or trust in the mercy of God. It strengthened him to bear more easily the pains of sickness and to resist more easily the temptations of the devil. **Extreme Unction comforts us in the pains of sickness and strengthens us against temptations.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* That is the first great effect of this Sacrament: it heals and

strengthens the soul; it heals the soul perfectly and prepares it to enter immediately into Heaven.

3. The young man was ready at once to confess and wanted to make a good Confession. But, I wonder whether he was still able to examine his conscience well? You know, that the penitent ought to think earnestly over his sins. But that is almost impossible for one who is seriously ill. Must the poor soul therefore go to Purgatory for a long time? How disquieting and fearful would not that be for a dying person! But it is not so. Extreme Unction has the power of purifying the soul from venial sins. That is the second grace: **Extreme Unction remits venial sins.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

4. Yes more than that! Perhaps the young man also had mortal sins on his conscience. Now suddenly he became unconscious and had to interrupt the Confession. How sad, if he had to die like that! For you all know, that eternal death attaches to mortal sin. But that young man had already repented of his sins and then he also received Extreme Unction. But Extreme Unction holds good for, takes the place of, Penance, in case of necessity. We cannot be grateful enough for that to the good God; for otherwise thousands would be lost forever. But how do we know that?—St. James has said so expressly: "if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him." That is especially consoling: *Extreme Unction also remits those mortal sins, which the sick person can no more confess. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

5. If the sin is forgiven, is then all else also forgiven?—No, generally also some of the *temporal punishments* remain. But Extreme Unction removes these remains of sin. Would that young man then have entered Heaven at once after death?—I do not know; that depends particularly upon his contrition.—When sin is forgiven, generally something else also remains.

Within the heart there burns a mysterious fire—*an inclination to sin, a weakness of the will,* which is due to our past sins and which makes the last battle with the powers of darkness more difficult. All this is left over, remains, in the soul, even after the sin itself has been forgiven. We call this the "remains of sin." **By the remains of sin I mean the inclination to evil and the weakness of the will, which are the result of our sins, and which remain after our sins have been forgiven.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

6. Now by means of Extreme Unction this fire of our evil inclination and this weakness of the will are lessened, yes, at times they are extinguished entirely. Many a sick and dying person has lost all inclination to sin. Thus you see, that Extreme Unction heals the soul perfectly and prepares it for Heaven. Our Catechism says: **Extreme Unction cleanses our soul from the remains of sin.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Extreme Unction does all that for *the welfare of the soul.* But this Sacrament is also for the body. Let us therefore now ask: *What does Extreme Unction do for the body?*

7. The condition of the young man of our story became worse and worse; the danger was at its height. Even the doctor thought that the young man would not live till morning. But what happened?—During the night the sickness eased up and the danger of death was over. Extreme Unction did that. One can often notice that in the case of sick persons: *Extreme Unction relieves the pains of the sick person.* "The Lord will raise him up," says St. James; that holds also for the body. But the sickness not only was relieved, in a short while the sick person was well again. Without Extreme Unction he would, most likely, have died. Indeed it happens frequently, that this Sacrament even restores health. Where no man is able to help any more, there God can help. But to what will

God always look?—Do you see? Later on that young man became a priest and as a priest he can do much good for his own soul's salvation and for the salvation of the souls of children and grownups. God foresaw that and therefore he restored health again to that sick man. But if God forsees, that a sick man will fall into mortal sins or even lose his soul, He permits him to die. Thus it is best for his soul's welfare. Remember then: **Extreme Unction restores us to health when God sees fit.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

Extreme Unction:

Increases sanctifying grace—gives special (sacramental) graces:

1. To the soul:

   (a) comforts us in the pains of sickness and strengthens us against temptation; (b) remits venial sins; (mortal sins).

2. To the body:

   (c) cleanses us from the remains of sins; (d) relieves the pains of the sick; (e) restores to health, when God sees fit.

Remains of sin: temporal punishments; inclination to evil; weakness of will due to sin.

Synthesis. A person seriously ill and dying needs help for body and soul. Today we saw: **Extreme Unction is that Sacrament, which gives health and strength to the soul, and sometimes to the body, when we are in danger of death from sickness.** What does Extreme Unction do for the welfare of the soul?—In what cases is Extreme Unction without effect?—What does this Sacrament do for the welfare of the body?—What does St. James say of the graces of Extreme Unction? What do you mean by the remains of sin?

—(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)

Application. 1. Once a priest was called to a dying person. The man lay there unconscious. What was to be done? The priest gave him absolution and then Extreme Unction. Later on this man's wife said: "Now Father, it is just as though he had received all the Sacraments, is it not?—Do you think so too?—There can be no question of that. Extreme Unction can indeed take the place of *Confession* in case of necessity; but it can never replace *Contrition.* You knew that long ago: Contrition is so necessary, that it cannot be supplied by anything in any case whatsoever. If the poor sick person had mortal sins and no contrition, Extreme Unction was without effect and he was hopelessly lost. There you see again, how important sanctifying grace is and how carefully you ought to preserve it in your heart. Only no mortal sin!

2. A Saint was about to die. When he had received Extreme Unction and heard the words: "By Thy cross and sufferings, O Lord, redeem us!", he repeated them three times and said: "Yes, Thy cross and sufferings, O Lord! are my hope. In this hope I will die." Already the end was at hand. Suddenly his face became very serious and he cried out: "Yes, great is the power of Hell, but greater still is the power of the Crucified One!" But after a while he was filled with joy and said: "Now I have conquered completely. Now I resign myself entirely to the mercy of God!" His countenance became transfigured, a lovely smile played about his mouth, and quietly and peacefully he breathed forth his soul.—You understand the words of the Saint, do you not? Extreme Unction is the comfort and the strength of the dying.

LESSON L.

The Reception of Extreme Unction.

Catechetical Unit:

1) When should we receive Extreme Unction? L. XXV, Q. 272.
2) How should we receive the Sacrament of Extreme Unction? L. XXV, Q. 276.
3) Should we wait until we are in extreme danger before we receive Extreme Unction? L. XXV, Q. 273.

Preparation. Dear children, when St. Eleazar was at the point of death, suddenly his features became all distorted and he complained: "Oh, the wicked enemy is torturing me terribly and does not give me any rest!" Immediately he received Extreme Unction. Then suddenly he became very quiet and happy; all his fear and anxiety were gone. What graces does Extreme Unction produce? We heard of that in the last class. Let us review it. *(Question the pupils briefly on the foregoing lesson.)*—What Sacraments does a person, who is dangerously ill, receive?—Penance, Viaticum and Extreme Unction. We call these *"the Last Sacraments."* Who of you was present, when a sick person was being prepared for death? What can you tell me about that?—

Aim. Now I am going to tell you: *how a sick person ought to prepare himself and how he ought to receive the Last Sacraments.*

Presentation. A father lay sick abed for a long time. He continually imagined that things were getting better; but they were always getting worse. One day the doctor said: "It is time for him to receive the Last Sacraments; for it will not last much longer." Mother and children became very sad at the thought: "Soon we shall not have any father any more." But

the mother was a strong Christian woman. She took heart and said: "See, dear father, things are not getting any better. I think, that you ought to prepare to receive the Last Sacraments. But you will not have to die on that account." The father was, of course, a little surprised. But quickly he controlled himself again and said: "I am satisfied. I have lived as a good Catholic and I will also die as a good Catholic." During that day he prayed a great deal and examined his conscience. In the evening the priest came, in order to hear his Confession. After that the father was very happy and said: "Now I can be quiet. I made a General Confession; everything is in order." The following night things were much better than they had been for a long time. For a good conscience makes a soft pillow.

As soon as he awoke early the next morning, he began to prepare himself. The mother provided fresh linen, arranged a little house altar and decorated it with fresh flowers. "For today our Lord is coming into our house; therefore everything must be clean and orderly." Now all was prepared. The priest came with the Blessed Sacrament. First he prayed with the sick man: "Oh my God! I believe in Thee, eternal truth. In this Faith I will live and die. O my God! I hope in Thee, infinite mercy. In this hope I will live and die. O my God; I love Thee, the highest good. In this love I will live and die. O my God! I commend myself entirely to Thy will. If it is Thy will, that I should live longer, Thy holy will be done. If it is Thy will, that I should suffer longer, Thy holy will be done! If it is Thy will, that I should die, Thy holy will be done." Thereupon the sick man received Holy Viaticum, Extreme Unction and finally the Apostolic Blessing or the Indulgence for the dying.

All was over. It lasted only a few more days, then the father lost consciousness and after a few hours he passed away. The mother and children wept bitterly

over their father. But they had the consolation: "Father died well. We will see him again."

Explanation. 1. This father had been sick for a long time. Why did he not receive Extreme Unction at once?—Does not St. James say: "Is any man sick among you, let him call in the priest of the Church?" —The sickness was not dangerous as yet. When there is no danger to life, one may not receive Extreme Unction. You know, of course, Extreme Unction is the Sacrament for those who are dangerously ill.

Neither may every one, who is dangerously ill, receive Extreme Unction. Once a mother begged a priest to come to her child, who was dangerously sick. The priest went. The child was only a few months old. He prayed over the child and blessed it and went away again. Soon afterwards the child died. Did that priest do the right thing?—A little child cannot sin as yet; therefore it does not need Extreme Unction. But when a child is about seven years of age, the case is different. If one says to such a child: "You may not do that; the heavenly Father will be angry!" the child understands that well enough. That child can distinguish between good and bad; it has the use of its reason. Such a child is already able to sin. Therefore it may and ought to receive Extreme Unction. Remember then: Every Catholic, who has come to the use of reason, and is in danger of death by sickness, or a wound or an accident, may and ought to receive Extreme Unction. Our Catechism says: **We should receive Extreme Unction when we are in danger of death from sickness, or from a wound or accident.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

2. That sick father died well, because he had prepared himself well for death. What was his first care, when he became aware of the danger?—He called for a priest, in order to confess. That was right; for **we should receive the Sacrament of Extreme Unction**

in the state of grace. *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* But most probably the sick man feared, that perhaps everything of his former life was not in order. And yet he wanted to be absolutely certain of all. Therefore he made a General Confession of his whole life. That is to be recommended to every sick person, if he has not attended to that before. To die without having made a General Confession is a dangerous matter. How easily is it not possible, that the former Confessions were defective! How often the right kind of contrition and the good resolution of amendment is wanting! That ought to be made good at least on one's death-bed. If it does not take place then, it will never take place. Then the sins will follow the dying person over into eternity. However, the sick man should follow the advice of the priest; he knows what is best.

But what, if the dangerously sick person is no longer able to confess? What if, for example, his tongue is paralyzed? Or if he must fear, lest he lose consciousness before the priest arrives? What must he do in that case?—The sick person ought immediately to excite himself to a hearty act of contrition, if possible to an act of contrition of holy love (perfect contrition.) Of course, contrition of holy fear (imperfect contrition) suffices also. You already know: Extreme Unction can supply for Confession in case of necessity,—but never without contrition. Remember therefore: *We are to receive Extreme Unction in the state of grace; wherefore we must previously, if possible, confess our sins; or, at least, make an act of perfect contrition. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. The priest had already appeared with the Blessed Sacrament. Before Holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction he prayed with the sick man the *acts of Faith, Hope and Charity. (Use the blackboard.)* But why just the acts of the three Divine Virtues?—The dying man has nothing more to hope for from men, he is in God's hands entirely. Therefore he ought to hold

fast to God by Faith, Hope and Charity. For what he believes, he is soon to see—God, face to face. What he hopes for, he is soon to possess—heavenly happiness. What he loves, he is soon to love for eternity—the triune God.

Because only God can help in the last extremity, therefore the dying person ought to *resign himself* entirely to God's will. How did the priest pray for the sick man?—Thus also did the Saviour pray in His death agony: "Father, not My will be done, but Thine!" Christ is the model for the dying. The Christian ought to accept the bitter chalice of death and drink it for love of God and as penance for his sins. **We should receive the Sacrament of Extreme Unction with lively Faith and resignation to the will of God.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

4. The father did not suspect at all, how badly matters were with him. The mother called his attention to the danger. But there are people, who do not dare to say anything; they think that the sick person will get frightened. That is not kind, but rather cruel and unscrupulous. How sad, if the sick person has to die without the Sacraments! And what a reproach for one's entire life, if some one had to say of one's self: Through my fault father or mother died without the Last Sacraments! The sick father was ready at once for the Last Sacraments. He was as yet in his right senses: he could still pray and examine his conscience, feel sorry for his sins and confess and thus prepare himself for the Last Sacraments properly. That is the proper time. **We should not wait until we are in extreme danger before we receive Extreme Unction, but if possible we should receive it while we have the use of our senses.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

1. Who receives Extreme Unction?
   One dangerously ill through sickness, wound or accident.

2. How is Extreme Unction to be received?

a) state of grace—Confession—contrition;

b) Acts of Faith, Hope, Charity, resignation to God's will;

c) while we have use of our senses—after Holy Viaticum (3).

Synthesis. You know the graces of Holy Unction. Now you also know, how the sick person ought to prepare himself, in order to receive the grace of Extreme Unction. Who can and ought to receive Extreme Unction?—How ought the sick person to receive this Sacrament?—When ought we to receive the Sacrament of Extreme Unction?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. Extreme Unction is for those, who are dangerously ill. A woman got a severe stomachache while eating. The doctor prescribed black coffee. But in the middle of the night that sick person called for the priest, as though she were in danger of death. The priest came and scolded her severely and went home again. He did the proper thing. One does not die from such trifles. In such cases one does not need the priest. The Christian ought to bear all sufferings patiently as penance for his sins.

2. What things ought one to prepare for the Last Sacraments? The mother provided fresh linen. When such a distinguished Guest comes into the house, everything ought indeed to be neat and clean. The mother also prepared a little house altar. Generally one does that by spreading a white cloth over a table. On it one places in the center towards the rear of the table a crucifix between two burning wax candles; to the right a vessel containing Holy Water, to the left an ordinary glass with clean water and a teaspoon; also

a saucer with a little salt and six little balls of cotton batting. Do you know what they are for?—The cotton batting and salt are to be thrown into the fire after Extreme Unction has been administered.

3. When the end draws near, one ought to light a blessed candle and assist the dying person. But how? Some one ought to pray aloud once more the acts of Faith, Hope, Charity and Contrition of holy love; sprinkle the dying person often with Holy Water and give him the crucifix to kiss. If the death struggle continues, one should pray the Litany of the Saints and from time to time recite aloud for the dying person little ejaculations: "My Jesus mercy! Sweet Heart of Jesus, have mercy on me! O Mary, Mother of mercy, pray for us! Holy Guardian Angel assist me!" When the final moment comes, call the Holy Name of Jesus three times into the ear of the dying person.

4. Many people imagine, that when they are prepared for the Last Sacraments, they must surely die; therefore they postpone the reception of these Sacraments as long as possible. Foolishness! Extreme Unction can even restore to bodily health. But he that waits until the last moment can not be helped any longer. For otherwise God would have to work a miracle. Many fear the gossip of the neighbors. Foolishness! One does not die because of the gossip of people; that depends upon God's will. Therefore the rule holds good: As *soon* as possible, not as late as possible! The sooner, the better!

5. A happy death is a great grace; for as we die, so we remain for eternity. Therefore we ought often to pray for the grace of the Last Sacraments. As Patron of the dying we honor especially Jesus' foster-father, St. Joseph and St. Barbara. Let us now pray together: "Jesus, Mary and Joseph! I give you my heart and my soul!"—"Jesus, Mary and Joseph! assist me in my dying hour."—"Jesus, Mary and Joseph, may my soul depart in peace with you. Amen."

VI.
HOLY ORDERS

LESSON LI.

Holy Orders.

Catechetical Unit:

1) On whom did Christ Himself confer the Priesthood? (Deharbe)
2) Was the Priesthood to end with the death of the Apostles? (Deharbe)
3) How was the Priesthood continued? (Deharbe)
4) What is necessary to receive Holy Orders worthily? L. XXV, Q. 279.
5) What is the Sacrament of Holy Orders? L. XXV, Q. 278.
6) What are the principal powers of the Priesthood? (Deharbe)
7) Who can confer the Sacrament of Holy Orders? L. XXV, Q. 281.
8) Can a priest be deprived of his ordination? (Deharbe)
9) How should Christians look upon the priests of the Church? L. XXV, Q. 280.

(N. B. For the first presentation of the subject matter of Holy Orders, it seems better to insist mainly on the basic truths of the *priestly* powers and dignity, leaving for a later lesson a more complete development of the meaning of the episcopate and the other major and minor orders. The catechist will ask the children to memorize for the next class only the answers of the Baltimore Catechism.)

Preparation. Dear children, the first five Sacraments are meant for all Christians. The other two are only for those, who wish to enter into the state of the Holy Priesthood or of Matrimony. Consequently these two Sacraments—the Priesthood, or Holy Orders, and Matrimony—are called "the Sacraments of a special state of life."

You already know: When was the first ordination to the Holy Priesthood?—At the Last Supper was the first Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the first Holy Communion and the first holy ordination to the Priesthood. Then Jesus spoke those great words: "Do this in commemoration of Me!" At that solemn moment the Apostles were made priests (and Bishops); Christ Himself conferred upon them the Sacrament of the Priesthood, or Holy Orders. You see, then, that Holy Orders is not from men, but rather from God. 1. *Christ Himself instituted the Priesthood, when He made His Apostles priests. (Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*—But the Apostles died. Did the Priesthood also cease to be?—That cannot be; for otherwise the Church would also cease to be. But the Church is to continue to the end of time; it is indefectible. Therefore 2. *the Priesthood was not to end with the death of the Apostles any more than the Church was to end at their death. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* —But how was the Priesthood to continue?—The Apostles ordained other worthy men to be priests (and Bishops). Thus it has continued in the Church up to our own times. So it will be to the end of the world. 3. *The Priesthood was continued by the Sacrament of Holy Orders. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Aim. Now doubtless you would like to know, *how the Sacrament of Holy Orders is conferred.* I am going to describe it to you. Then you will see clearly, *what powers the priest has.*

Presentation. Whoever wants to become a priest, must first be called by God to this holy office and dignity. The candidate must study many years, until he is at least twenty-four years old. Then he must ascend to the priestly dignity by seven steps. First he receives the four lower, or minor, orders (the orders of porter, lector, exorcist, acolyte). Henceforth he may perform the lower, or minor, offices of the Church.

At least that was the custom in the early Church. (Now the janitor and the altar-boys perform those offices, at least in part.) After the four minor orders come the two higher, or major, orders (the orders of subdeacon and deacon). They are allowed to perform the higher offices of the Church. They assist the priest at a solemn High Mass. The deacon may also baptize solemnly and preach and distribute Holy Communion. Only on the seventh step comes the third major order, the Holy Priesthood.

Ordination to the Holy Priesthood is a very beautiful and impressive ceremony. It is conferred by the Bishop during Holy Mass. Before the Offertory the Bishop kneels down before the altar, the deacons prostrate themselves with their faces downwards upon the floor. Meanwhile the Litany of All the Saints is chanted. *(Use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the Explanation.)* Toward the end of the Litany the Bishop stands up and solemnly calls down the blessing of God upon the deacons, saying: "We beseech Thee, hear us! Vouchsafe, O Lord, to bless, and to sanctify, and to consecrate these chosen ones." Then the Bishop imposes his hands upon the head of each deacon. *(Use the blackboard.)* Thereupon he says a long prayer. That is the great moment of ordination to the Holy Priesthood. Now those who are ordained are already priests. Therefore the Bishop gives to each one the sacred vestments, namely the stole and the chasuble. *(Use the blackboard.)* He also anoints the hands of each young priest with holy chrism, saying: "Vouchsafe, O Lord, to consecrate and sanctify these hands by this unction, and our blessing, so that whatever they shall bless may be blessed, and whatever they shall consecrate may be consecrated and sanctified: in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!" *(Use the blackboard).* Thereupon each one also receives the chalice and paten with the offerings of bread and wine *(Use the blackboard),* while the Bishop says the words: "Receive the power

to offer the Sacrifice to God and to celebrate Mass, as well for the living as for the dead, in the name of the Lord!" *(Use the blackboard.)*

Now the newly ordained priests offer at once together with the Bishop their first Holy Mass. All pray together with the Bishop the prayers of the Holy Mass; also the sacred words of Consecration: "This is My Body—This is My Blood!" *(Use the blackboard.)* At Holy Communion they received from the hands of the Bishop the Sacred Body of the Lord. After Communion the Bishop seats himself before the altar, and each priest kneels before him on the altar steps. The Bishop lays his hands upon the head of each priest and says: "Receive the Holy Ghost: whose sins thou shalt forgive they are forgiven them; and whose sins thou shalt retain they are retained" *(Use the blackboard.)* Then the Bishop takes the hands of each newly ordained priest into his own, and asks earnestly and solemnly: "Dost thou promise to me and to my successors reverence and obedience?" Each one answers earnestly and solemnly: "I do so promise." As a sign of joy the Bishop then kisses each one and says: "May the peace of the Lord be always with thee!" *(Use the blackboard.)* Then follow the final word of advice from the Bishop and the solemn concluding blessing. The ordination is over. *(Show the pupils a large picture of this scene.)*

Let us now look over the chief points a little more closely. Then I shall explain them to you a little more in detail.

Write on the blackboard:

1. The Litany of All the Saints;
2. The imposition of hands and prayer;
3. The giving of the sacred vestments;
4. The sacred unction; giving the sacred vessels;
5. The power of Consecration;
6. First Holy Mass;

7. The power to forgive sins;

8. The promise of obedience—the kiss of peace.

Explanation. 1. This is a very beautiful and touching ceremony. But before a young man is made a priest, he must desire to become a priest and must be found worthy of this high dignity. St. Paul says: "Neither does any man take the honor to himself, but he that is called by God, as Aaron was" (Heb. v, 4). He means to say: God must call a young man to the office of the Priesthood. Therefore to receive the Sacrament of Holy Orders worthily it is necessary to have *a divine call* to this sacred office: a vocation to the Holy Priesthood. Once a young man feels that he should become a priest, he begins *to study* and to prepare himself by *a holy life* for many years in the seminary. For a priest must be a teacher of the faithful and a shepherd of souls in the name of Christ. You can well imagine, therefore, with what holy zeal and fervor the young man purifies his soul from all sin, so that he may be found worthy of the Holy Priesthood. Finally when the Bishop and the seminary authorities know that the candidate is fit, they call him for holy ordination. Remember then: **to receive Holy Orders worthily, it is necessary to be in the state of grace, to have the necessary knowledge and a divine call to this sacred office.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

2. a) What orders precede the Holy Priesthood?—Only after the candidate has received the four minor orders and the two major orders (sub-deaconship and deaconship) may he be ordained a priest. Ordination to the Priesthood is introduced by the Litany of All the Saints. What do you suppose is the reason of that?—All the Saints of Heaven are called upon to pray to God for those who are to be ordained priests. For to become a priest one needs much grace, and therefore also many intercessors with God. During

the recitation of the Litany of All the Saints the deacons lie with their faces downward upon the floor before the altar. That perhaps will surprise you. What does that ceremony mean?—They wish by that action to say, as it were: O great God! we are not worthy of the sublime dignity of the Priesthood. Therefore we humbly and fervently beg of Thee, to make us worthy of this great grace!

Then follows the decisive moment. How is the *Priesthood conferred?*—The Bishop in silence imposes his hands upon the head of each deacon; then he recites a long prayer. Thus the priestly power is conferred. But the priest also needs grace that he may exercise this high and sacred office properly. He receives this grace from the Holy Ghost. That is the Sacrament of Holy Orders. We have, therefore, (1) the imposing of hands and the prayer of the Bishop; that is the *outward sign*—things we can see and hear; (2) the Holy Ghost gives the *priestly power* and the *inward grace* through that outward sign; finally (3) *Jesus Christ Himself instituted* that outward sign that gives the priestly power and grace. Let us remember, therefore: **Holy Orders is a Sacrament by which priests are ordained and receive the power and grace to perform their sacred duties.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*—After the Bishop has laid his hands upon the heads of the deacons, the priests also who are present at the ordination impose their hands upon each newly ordained priest. Thereby they wish to declare: You also are now priests just the same as we!

b) If later on a priest is selected by the Pope to become a *Bishop,* he is consecrated or ordained with special ceremonies for this sacred office. Three Bishops impose hands upon that priest's head and one of the Bishops recites a special prayer; thereby that priest receives the power of a Bishop. The Holy Ghost gives him grace for that high office. Jesus Christ Himself instituted that outward sign and joined to it inward

grace and power. That is the Sacrament of Holy Orders. Therefore: **Holy Orders is a Sacrament by which Bishops are consecrated and receive the power and grace to perform their sacred duties.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; insert the word "Bishops.")*

c) Before being made a priest, the candidate must receive the four minor orders and the two major orders from the Bishop. Thereby he is made a *"minister"* of the Church; he may now assist or minister at the altar. But the greatest of these orders is that by which a person is made a *"deacon."* The Bishop confers the order of deaconship by imposing his right hand upon the head of the subdeacon and saying at the same time a special prayer. That is the *outward* sign. By means of that outward sign the Holy Ghost comes into the soul of the deacon and gives him *special power* and *grace* to enable him to fulfil the duties of his office. No man can attach inward grace to an outward sign; only *God* can do that. Therefore ordination to the office of deaconship is a true Sacrament, as the Church commonly teaches. You see, then, that when our Catechism speaks of "other ministers" of the Church it means especially the "deacons." **Holy orders is a Sacrament by which other ministers of the Church are consecrated and receive the power and grace to perform their sacred duties.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard inserting the words "other ministers.)*

Now let us repeat the entire answer of the Catechism: *Holy Orders is a Sacrament by which Bishops, priests, and other ministers of the Church are ordained and receive the power and grace to perform their sacred duties.*

3. Let us think again of the beautiful ceremonies by which the Priesthood is conferred. After the Bishop has imposed his hands and spoken a special prayer, the chief thing has taken place. Now the newly ordained priest also receives *the signs of his*

priestly dignity. What are they?—Interiorly the priest has already received the unction of the Holy Ghost; now the Bishop also *anoints* the priest exteriorly, namely, upon his hands. You can easily discover the reason for this.—The hands of the priest bless and consecrate; his hands hold the most Sacred Body of the Lord at Holy Consecration in the Mass. In many countries the beautiful custom obtains, by which the people kiss the priest's hand.—The newly ordained priest has already received the power of Consecration. But now the Bishop shows outwardly in a special and solemn manner that the newly ordained priest has the power of celebrating the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and of changing bread and wine. With what words does that take place?—That is the first and greatest priestly power: *to change bread and wine into the Body and Blood of the Lord. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* The priest exercises this power at once and celebrates with the Bishop his first Holy Mass.

4. But the power of Consecration is not the only power of the priest. You know what took place on the first Easter evening.—Jesus, the Risen Saviour, appeared suddenly in the midst of His disciples and saluted them, saying: "Peace be with you!" Then He breathed upon them and said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost!"—What Christ once did, that, the Bishop does now. He does not indeed breathe upon the priest, but he imposes his hands upon him and speaks the very same words: "Receive the Holy Ghost! Whose sins thou shalt forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins thou shalt retain, they are retained." Now the priest is also a confessor. That is the second great power of the priest: *the power of forgiving sins. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

That is not, of course, as yet the full power of the Priesthood. The Bishop, when anointing the hands of the priest, says expressly: "What they shall bless, shall be blessed, and what they shall consecrate, shall

be consecrated and sanctified!" Do you see? The priest has also *the power of blessing and sanctifying. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* He has also *the power of administering the Sacraments of Extreme Unction and solemn Baptism, of instructing children and of feeding and watching over the flock of Christ in the name of the Bishop. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

5. Who ordains the new priests?—Only the Bishop can do that; a priest has no power to do that. For the Bishop is more than a priest; he has received the fulness of the Priesthood, when he was consecrated a Bishop. The consecration to the office of Bishop is the crown of priesthood. **Bishops can confer the Sacrament of Holy Orders.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

6. How long does a person remain a priest?—Perhaps as long as he wishes?—There have been priests who have fallen away from the Faith. Did they then cease to be priests?—You know, that a baptized person receives from the Holy Ghost an indelible mark in his soul—the mark of Baptism. Therefore the baptized person always remains a baptized person. The person confirmed likewise receives a mark, the sign of Confirmation. Therefore the person confirmed remains forever a confirmed Christian. The very same thing is true in regard to Holy Orders. The priest receives the mark of the Priesthood from the Holy Ghost. Whoever is once a priest remains a priest forever.—*The priest can as little be deprived of ordination as of Baptism, because it imprints an indelible character upon the soul. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

7. Now you can understand what wonderful powers and dignity the priest possesses! He is God's messenger sent to announce the glad tidings of salvation. He gives us the precious graces, which Jesus earned for us by His death on the Cross, through the Holy Sacraments. He offers up the adorable Sacrifice of

the Mass. He feeds and watches over the flock of Christ. No wonder, then, that **Christians should look upon the priests of the Church as the messengers of God and the dispensers of His mysteries.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

Holy Orders:

1. Instituted by Christ, Who made His Apostles priests.

2. To continue forever in the Church—through the Sacrament of Holy Orders. (3)

4. Requires—state of grace, necessary knowledge, divine call.

5. Sacrament—outward sign (imposition of hands, prayer of Bishop)—inward grace and power—to Bishops, priests, other ministers of Church (especially deacons).

6. Priestly powers: a) to change bread and wine (in Holy Mass);
   b) to forgive sins (in Penance);
   c) to bless and sanctify;
   d) to administer Sacraments, instruct, feed and watch over Christ's flock.

Synthesis. Now we have gathered all together that you ought to know about the Priesthood. Who instituted the Priesthood?—When?—Was the Priesthood to cease with the death of the Apostles?—How is the Priesthood continued in the Church?—What must he do, who wishes to become a priest?—What is the Sacrament of Holy Orders?—Which is the greatest of the orders just below the Priesthood?—Which are the powers of the Priesthood?—Which is the chief priestly power?—Who can administer Holy Orders?—Can the priestly ordination ever be lost?—Why not?—Which

Sacraments can be received only once in a lifetime?—How should Christians look upon the priests of the Church?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. *Only he that has the Priesthood has also the priestly power.* Protestants have no Priesthood. Martin Luther, the father of the Protestant faith, did away with the Sacrament of the Priesthood. He said: Every Christian is a priest. And yet, they go to the Lord's Supper. Do they also receive the Body of the Lord?—That cannot be. Their ministers cannot change bread and wine; for they have no power of Consecration without the Priesthood. Their ministers also declare: "Your sins are forgiven." Is that really true?—They cannot forgive sins; for without the Priesthood, there is no power of forgiving sins.

2. *The priest has a high dignity;* for he is Christ's representative. Therefore you ought to honor the priest.—In the life of the great and holy Bishop, Francis de Sales, it is related: A newly ordained priest was about to leave the church. He remained standing for a few moments at the church door, as though he first wanted to allow some one to pass out ahead of him. The Bishop saw it and was astonished. Outside the church he asked that young priest the reason for this. The newly ordained priest answered: "God has granted me the grace of seeing my Guardian Angel. Before I was made a priest, he always went ahead of me. But today he remained standing at the church door, and let me go ahead, in order to honor me. He said, that he is my servant and the servant of every priest." Thus also should you honor every priest and not despise any one of God's anointed priests. Jesus said: "He that despiseth you, despiseth Me." To despise a priest brings a bad ending.

3. *But the priest has also a heavy burden.*—To pray, to fast, to hear Confessions, to administer the

Last Sacraments, to live a chaste single life, to avoid worldly pleasures. He must take care that none of his little sheep are lost. St. John Chrysostom, therefore, said on the day of his ordination: "Now I need many thousands of intercessors, so that on the day of judgment I may not be cast into exterior darkness!" Yes, the priest does need many graces. Therefore you ought also to pray for your priests. The Church asks you to pray for good priests especially on the Ember-days.

VII.
MATRIMONY

LESSON LII.

(I) Matrimony.

Catechetical Unit:

1) How is Christian Matrimony received? (Deharbe)

2) What is the Sacrament of Matrimony? L. XXVI, Q. 282.

3) Can a Christian man and woman be united in lawful marriage in any other way than by the Sacrament of Matrimony? L. XXVI, Q. 283.

4) Can the bond of Christian marriage be dissolved by any human power? L. XXVI, Q. 284.

5) Which are the effects of the Sacrament of Matrimony? L. XXVI, Q. 285.

6) To receive the Sacrament of Matrimony worthily is it necessary to be in the state of grace? L. XXVI, Q. 286.

Preparation. Dear children,, there are two Sacraments for a particular state in life. In the last class we learned about one of these: Holy Orders. Let us first review this teaching. *(Question the pupils briefly on the foregoing lesson.)*—The second of the Sacraments for a particular state in life is called Matrimony. Do you know who the first married people were?—God first created Adam. But Adam was as yet alone on earth. He could not speak with any one. No one helped him in his work, and no one shared with him his happiness. Then God spoke: "It is not good for man to be alone. Let us make him a help like unto him." God, therefore, cast a deep sleep upon Adam. From the side of the sleeping Adam God took a rib and built it into a woman. As soon as Adam awoke, God led the woman to him. And God blessed them both.—That was the first marriage. Our first par-

ents were the first married people. Marriage is, therefore, from God and is sacred. But through Christ it became even more sacred—a Sacrament. Many Christians, of course, do not know that and do not want to know it.

Aim. Therefore I am going to tell you the chief things, which a child ought to know about Matrimony, or marriage: (1) *How is the Sacrament of Matrimony received?* and (2) *Which are the effects of Matrimony?*

Presentation. When two persons, a man and a woman, want to get married, they first go to the parish priest and tell him of their intention. The priest instructs them carefully about this great and holy Sacrament. *(Use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the Explanation.)* He also tells them about the duties, which a husband and wife owe to each other. The couple then go to Confession, for they want to receive Matrimony in the state of grace. *(Use the blackboard.)* On the day set for the marriage the bride and bridegroom come with their relatives and friends to the church at the appointed time. The altar is specially decorated for the occasion, and in some churches there is a kneeling-bench placed before the altar for the couple about to be married. The priest stands before the altar facing the couple. Beside them are two witness (best man and best woman). The priest gives the bridal parties a short instruction on the holiness of the Sacrament, which they are about to receive, and then puts several questions to them.

All are standing. First the priest asks the bridegroom: "N- wilt thou take N- here present for thy lawful wife, according to the rite of our Holy Mother the Church?" The bridegroom answers: "I will." Then the priest asks the bride: "N- wilt thou take N- here present for thy lawful husband, according to the rite of our Holy Mother the Church?" And the bride

answers: "I will." Thereupon they join their right hands and first the bridegroom says: "I N- take thee N- here present for my lawful wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death do us part." The bride in like manner agrees to take the bridegroom as her husband with the same words. *(Use the blackboard.)* Then the priest makes the sign of the cross over them and says: "I join you in Matrimony. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." Thereupon he sprinkles them with Holy Water.

Now the marriage bond is contracted. Immediately there follows the ceremony of blessing the marriage ring. *(Use the blackboard.)* The bridegrom then places the ring on the bride's finger and says at the same time: "With this ring I thee wed, and I plight unto thee my troth." That ring should remind the married couple of the duty of remaining faithful to each other till death. A few more prayers are added by the priest, in order that God may assist them with His holy grace. Finally the Nuptial Mass is celebrated for the newly married persons. *(Use the blackboard.)* After the Pater noster the priest gives a special blessing to the bride. *(Use the blackboard.)* Both receive Holy Communion with fervor and devotion asking God to bless them. *(Use the blackboard.)* Thus the solemn ceremonies of Christian Matrimony are ended. *(Show the pupils a large picture of this scene.)*

Write on the blackboard:

1. Instructions.
2. Confession.
3. Words of the marriage contract.
4. Blessing and giving of the ring.
5. Nuptial Mass, blessing of the bride, Holy Communion.

Explanation. 1. Generally Matrimony is contracted in the church. Such is the will of God's Holy Church. The bridal couple appear before the altar and the priest (the pastor). He asks them solemnly, whether it is their earnest wish to take each other as husband and wife, or as we also say, to contract the marriage-bond. The bridal couple declare that such is their earnest intention, in as much as they reply loudly and clearly: "I will," and clasp each other by the right hand, in token of their life's union. The priest and the two witnesses hear and see this. Now the marriage is contracted: now they are no longer "single" as before, but husband and wife. After this declaration of marriage has taken place, the priest blesses the marriage-bond and as a visible sign of this he also blesses the marriage ring. Thus, dear children, is Matrimony contracted among Christians. *The bridegroom and the bride declare before their pastor, that they take each other for husband and wife, whereupon the priest blesses their union. (Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

2. Matrimony comes from the garden of Paradise. Already in the Old Testament it was always something holy and sacred. But it was not always held to be a Sacrament. Therefore when God gave Eve to Adam to be his wife, there was indeed a firm union between husband and wife, but it was not a Sacrament. God loves all men, for they are His creatures. Therefore He has arranged that children, when they come into the world, have a father and a mother, who love them and care for them. It is due to God, then, that parents love their children and that children are taken care of in the best way in the family. The same is true also when two pagans marry each other. They are indeed closely united to each other as husband and wife, but they do not receive a Sacrament. That holds true only when two Christians, two baptized persons, take each other as husband and wife.

Christ the Lord, then, raised Matrimony to a much higher dignity; He made it a *Sacrament,* that is, a *sacred union* through which the married couple receive *grace,* in order that they may be able to perform faithfully their duties as married people and thus some day go to Heaven as a reward for their fidelity. Thus did the early Christians believe. We know that from Holy Scripture. St. Paul says expressly: "This (that is Matrimony) is a great Sacrament: but I speak in Christ and in the Church" (Eph. v, 32). He means to say: Matrimony among Christians is a great Sacrament, because it is an image, a likeness, of the mysterious union, which exists between Christ and His Church. Just as the union between Christ and the Catholic Church is a sacred, a holy union, through which the Church receives the greatest graces, so also the union between Christians in Matrimony is a sacred, a holy union, through which the married people receive great graces. Thus has the Church always taught from the very beginning. We have received this teaching from the Apostles as a sacred inheriance. Therefore our Catechism says: **The Sacrament of Matrimony is a Sacrament which unites a Christian man and woman in lawful marriage.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. With us Christians, therefore, Matrimony is just as much a Sacrament as Baptism, or Holy Orders, or any of the other Sacraments. Matrimony between Christians has all that is required for a true Sacrament. It is an outward sign, instituted by Christ to give grace. Two persons, man and woman, declare publicly, that they agree to take each other as husband and wife. We can hear that. They join their right hands. We can see that. It is a sign that now they are united to each other very much after the manner in which Christ is united to His Bride, the Church. Therefore we have an *outward sign.* Through this union God Himself gives grace, first an increase of sanctifying grace, and then secondly special (sacra-

mental) graces, so that the married couple may faithfully fulfil the duties of their state of life. Thus this outward sign gives *grace.* This grace, Matrimony, could never give, unless *Jesus Christ* Himself had united this grace with Matrimony, that is, unless He had *instituted* Matrimony as a Sacrament. You see, then, in regard to Christian Matrimony we have the three things which are necessary to make a Sacrament. Consequently Matrimony is a Sacrament. Christians, who enter into the married state always receive the Sacrament of Matrimony. It cannot be otherwise. Therefore our Catechism says: **A Christian man and woman cannot be united in lawful marriage in any other way than by the Sacrament of Matrimony, because Christ has raised marriage to the dignity of a Sacrament.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

4. The bridal parties agree to take each other as husband and wife "for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death do us part." Yes, so it is. A Christian man and woman, who have lawfully and validly entered into Matrimony, cannot separate and marry again, while either party is living. Christian marriage cannot be dissolved except by death. Neither can the priest, or the Bishop, or even the Pope, dissolve the marriage-tie. It is indissoluble except by death. **The bond of Christian marriage cannot be dissolved by any human power.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* Jesus Himself has said that expressly to the Jews: "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder" (Matt. xiv, 6). Thus has the Catholic Church taught always in Christ's name.

(Sometimes indeed it happens, that persons are not really married, although they go through the ceremony and people think that they are married. However, the Church makes them separate, because she finds that they never were really married at all—on account of some circumstance, which existed at the time the cere-

mony was performed and which prevented them from becoming lawfully married. We shall speak more in detail of some of these impediments or hindrances in the next class. You see, then, that in such a case the Church does not dissolve the marriage-bond, or grant a divorce, but only declares that the man and woman were never really married at all.)

5. Before the bridal couple enters into the married state, the priest instructs them carefully about three important *duties*, and tells them about the *graces* they are to receive.

a) The husband and wife are to live in love and fidelity to each other till death parts them. That is not an easy matter; for in the married life there are sometimes bad days. And yet, husband and wife ought to live together steadfastly in good fortune and misfortune. There ought not to be any such thing as hatred, or dissension, or quarrelling, but rather love and peace and harmony; no such thing as unfaithfulness, but only fidelity to each other till death. They ought to bear with each other's weaknesses and failings.—So it ought to be until death. Now in order that the married couple may be able to perform these hard duties they need special graces from God. The Sacrament of Matrimony gives them those graces.—**The effects of the Sacrament of Matrimony are 1. to sanctify the love of husband and wife; 2. to give them grace to bear with each other's weakness.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

b) There is another duty of married people. They are to bring up their children as children of God. Father and mother receive their children from God; therefore they are obliged to educate them so that they may indeed become children of God. Parents are to plant in the young hearts of their children the love and the fear of God. For all—father and mother and children—are some day to meet again in Heaven. That is a high and great duty of parents. Therefore they

need a special grace from God. That is another effect of Matrimony: **3. to enable them to bring up their children in the fear and love of God.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

c) Finally the husband must treat his wife with kindness, support and cherish her. Therefore the father must work diligently every day and must earn the daily bread for his wife and children. But the mother ought to save, to manage conscientiously her household concerns. And if the father commands, the mother must obey in all that is just and honorable. Of course, if the father were to command something, that is unjust or dishonorable, the mother would not be allowed to obey. But a Christian father would never do such a thing. You see, then, that father and mother need special graces to be able to perform these duties well. Therefore God gives them special graces. *Another effect of the Sacrament of Matrimony is that the husband should treat his wife with kindness, support and cherish her; the wife should obey her husband in all that is just and honorable, and conscientiously manage the domestic concerns. Matrimony gives special graces to enable husband and wife to perform these duties. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

6. For every Sacrament a preparation is necessary. That holds good also for Matrimony. How then ought the bridal couple to prepare for the reception of Matrimony?—We have already spoken of the instruction, which they must obtain from the priest. Besides that they must purify and sanctify their hearts by a worthy Confession and Holy Communion. For Matrimony is holy and sacred. Therefore the bridal couple may not enter into the state of marriage with unholy hearts. If they were to receive Matrimony in the hatred of God, with His disfavor, they could not expect any blessing from God. For everything depends upon God's blessing, especially in the married life. They must also carefully and conscientiously fulfil all the laws of the Church.—**To receive the Sacrament of**

Matrimony worthily, it is necessary to be in the state of grace, and it is necessary also to comply with the laws of the Church. *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

1. Bridegroom and bride declare before pastor and two witnesses—they take each other as husband and wife—priest blesses their union.
2. Matrimony—Sacrament of New Testament.
3. Christians can be married only by receiving Sacrament of Matrimony.
4. Christian Matrimony—cannot be dissolved except by death.
5. Effects of Matrimony:
   a) to sanctify the love of husband and wife;
   b) to give them grace to bear with each other's weakness;
   c) to bring up children in love and fear of God;
   d) to enable husband to support and cherish wife; to help wife to obey her husband and manage the household conscientiously.
6. Preparation—State of grace (Confession, Communion); comply with the laws of the Church.

Synthesis. Now we have all that children ought to know about Christian Matrimony. From whom does marriage come?—How did Christ honor or dignify Matrimony?—What does St. Paul say about Martimony?—Can Christians ever be married without receiving the Sacrament of Matrimony?—How do you know that?—Can married people obtain a divorce?—Which are the chief effects of Christian marriage?—How should Christians prepare for Matrimony?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. *Matrimony is a Sacrament.* Luther indeed introduced an entirely new teaching; for he said: "Matrimony is a purely worldly matter." Of course, Luther wanted to be wiser than St. Paul and the Church. What does St. Paul say of Matrimony?—And the Church solemnly and expressly defined: "Matrimony is a true Sacrament of Jesus Christ." Who is right? Matrimony is not a purely worldly matter, but a divine and a holy matter.

2. *Christian Matrimony is indissoluble;* the married couple must live together till death separates them. But you have heard of "separated married people."—If two cannot get along any more, they get a separation from the Church. Then they may indeed separate, but they are nevertheless married until death. Therefore they are not permitted to marry again, as long as one of the parties lives.—But generally most people go before the court and obtain a *divorce.* However, in God's sight that is not worth anything. It is even worse, when they attempt to get married again under those circumstances. Such a marriage is invalid. In punishment they are excommunicated from the Church.

3. You know that it is a law of the land, that the bridal couple first go to the civil authorities, in order to obtain a marriage license. Is that a marriage? —No, that is only a permission to get married. The Sacrament of Matrimony cannot be received before the civil authorities. St. Paul says expressly: "Matrimony is a great Sacrament: but I say *in Christ and in the Church.*"

4. Sometimes it happens that two persons have lived together for a long time like married people, although they have never been validly married. That is a wicked life—a very grievous sin. And even though later on they get married, they cannot expect much blessing. For he that sows sins, cannot reap blessings.

5. Christians must get married before the priest and two witnesses. Not every priest has the power to marry persons; only the pastor of the bridal couple has the right. Two witnesses must also be present, otherwise the marriage is not valid. Thus does the Church command. If a Catholic couple, therefore, would try to get married before a Protestant minister or a judge, they would not be married at all in the eyes of God and the Church.

6. The marriage state is a holy state of life. But it is also a state of trial and tribulation. Just ask your parents; they can tell you. What must not a father and mother often suffer from their children? Generally the marriage day is the most beautiful of days. Many have already complained: "Oh! if only I had never married."

LESSON LIII.

(II) Matrimony.

Catechetical Unit:

1) Who has the right to make laws concerning the Sacrament of marriage? L. XXVI, Q. 287.
2) Does the Church forbid the marriage of Catholics with persons who have a different religion or no religion at all? L. XXVI, Q. 288.
3) Why does the Church forbid the marriage of Catholics with persons who have a different religion or no religion at all? L. XXVI, Q. 289.
4) Why do so many marriages prove unhappy? L. XXVI, Q. 290.
5) How should Christians prepare for a holy and happy marriage? L. XXVI, Q. 291.

Preparation. Dear children, the most sacred marriage that ever took place on earth is doubtless the marriage of our Blessed Lady and St. Joseph. They

were not together from their youth. Only as they grew up did they learn to know each other and then they became united in holy wedlock and henceforth they lived together. The good God gave them a child, the Infant Jesus, and now the Holy Family was complete. Your parents, too, were not together from their youth. With many of you your father comes from a different place than your mother. When your father and your mother learned to know each other, and to love each other, they decided to get married. A definite day was agreed upon, and on this day they went together to the church, and the priest asked them, whether they wished to take each other as husband and wife. They answered "Yes," and ever since then your father and mother have been living together and will continue to live together until death parts them. Matrimony is a great Sacrament. Through this Sacrament the family is founded. Let us review this teaching. *(Question the pupils briefly on the preceding lesson.)*—Christ has entrusted to His Church the care of the Sacraments. How conscientious is not the Church in regard to these seven channels of grace, the Sacraments! Therefore she has made many laws to safeguard the Sacraments as perfectly as possible. The same is true of Matrimony. Which is the sixth Commandment of the Church?—What does it command?—

Aim. Today I shall speak to you more in detail about *certain laws which the Church has made, in order that Christians may receive Matrimony worthily and validly.*

Presentation. Don Ferdinand was a brave soldier. He spent many years in the service of Philip, King of Spain. But the time came when he was to return home and take over the government of his little principality. He was earnestly thinking about choosing a wife for himself and a loving princess for his subjects. That was a very important affair; therefore he thought

over it most seriously. At the royal court there were many daughters of noble families. One especially pleased him very much; she was, however, related to him. But since the Church has forbidden marriage with relatives, Don Ferdinand no longer thought of marrying her. Many of the others were beautiful and wealthy and talented. But he did not look upon these things. The qualities of the soul were dearer to him. He found these interior qualities of soul in the Countess Donna Martha. She was not as beautiful or wealthy as the others, but she had a pious and mild character and was generous and modest.

However, Don Ferdinand did not venture to tell her his resolution. Therefore he begged the king, who was well disposed to him, to ask for her hand for him. The king told it to the queen and she gladly told the news to the Countess Donna Martha. Donna Martha was not a little surprised at first, and did not know what to answer. She asked for time to consider, so that she might be able to take counsel with God and her parents. Hence she prayed much and had several Masses offered for her intention, in order that God might enlighten her mind. She also received the Sacraments and asked for the advice of the queen and of her parents. All were agreed, that she should give her consent.

Don Ferdinand was happy, when he heard the news. He wanted to celebrate the betrothal, or engagement, at once. They prepared themselves with earnestness and zeal for this important day. The evening before they went to Holy Confession and the next morning they received Holy Communion. But after their betrothal, or engagement, they did not meet very often; for it would have been improper and dangerous to be together often, as though they were already married people. However, when they did meet each other, they only talked of how they intended to live together piously and happily and how they intended to care for the welfare of their subjects. Generally the queen was

also present. They would have preferred to celebrate their marriage at once. That was, however, impossible. Don Ferdinand had still a great deal to take care of in his principality. Donna Martha had to arrange for her dowry. But just as soon as all arrangements had been taken care of, they celebrated their marriage. The last days immediately before their wedding were given over mostly to God. On the vigil of their wedding-day they received the Sacrament of Penance. The wedding was soleminized in the castle chapel. A few days later they went to their home. There they led a pious Christian life. Soon the good God gave them a little son. They called him in Holy Baptism by the name of Aloysius. This child became St. Aloysius, the glorious model of youth.

Explanation. 1. What a beautiful example are not these holy persons for all who wish to enter into the sacred state of marriage! The noble Don Ferdinand did not simply follow his natural inclinations in choosing a wife. The first thought that came to his mind was this: What does the Church wish? What does the Church forbid? Yes, thus every loyal Catholic thinks. For Matrimony is a Sacrament just as truly as Baptism or Holy Communion. Christ has entrusted the care of the Sacraments to His Church. She has the right to tell us what we are to do and what we are to avoid in regard to the reception of the Sacraments. Of course, the State also has a right to make laws concerning marriage. For instance, the State can make laws with regard to the property of persons who marry, with regard to the inheritance of the property of married people, with regard to the debts, which husband or wife contract, with regard to the marriage license and other purely worldly effects of marriage. These things are called the "civil effects of the marriage contract." But in regard to the Sacrament of Matrimony only the Church has the right to make laws. Remember then: **The Church has the right to make laws concerning the Sacrament of marriage,**

although the State has the right to make laws concerning the civil effects of the marriage contract. *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)*

2. The Church has made many laws concerning the Sacrament of Matrimony. You already know some of these laws. What is the sixth Commandment of the Church?—What do you mean by the precept not to marry within the third degree of kindred?—Why did not Don Ferdinand marry that noble lady, that pleased him most of all?—She was related with him by the bonds of blood. What do you mean by the Commandment of not marrying privately?—What is the meaning of the precept of not solemnizing marriage at forbidden times?—What is the Nuptial Mass?—Should Catholics be married at a Nuptial Mass?—It is the Church's most earnest wish, that her children should not marry persons, who have a different religion or no religion at all. Our Catechism says: **The Church is especially against marriages of Catholics and persons who have a different religion or no religion at all.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. There is a very good reason for this law of the Church. Nothing has such a bad influence upon a person as bad or improper company. Now when a Catholic marries one who is not a Catholic, or more so one who has no religion at all, the Catholic party is continually associated with one who in most cases is ignorant of the true Faith, or who speaks lightly of its devotions and practises. Soon the Catholic party will give in to these evil influences, and growing tired of numerous disputes or ridicule, will become more and more indifferent, yes, gradually give up the practise of the Catholic religion. Perhaps in the end the Catholic party will even lose the Faith entirely. That has happened time and again. You know that the children of Seth were good, until they married the children of Cain, and then they also became wicked; for there is always the likelihood that the bad will

pervert the good. Moreover, the children of such a marriage can hardly be brought up in the true Faith as they have a right to be brought up. Why? Because the father may want to attend one church and the mother another, and so to settle the dispute they will attend no church. What respect can the children have for the true religion, if they hear and see father and mother talking and acting like that?—For all these serious reasons the Catholic Church is opposed to *mixed marriages,* that is, to marriages between a Catholic and a baptized non-Catholic. With much greater reason does the Church oppose marriages between a Catholic and one who is not baptized at all, a heathen or a Jew, or with one, who has publicly given up the true Faith, or joined a society forbidden by the Church, as for example a Free Mason, or one who has no religion at all. The reason is: **because such marriages generally lead to indifferences, loss of Faith, and to neglect the religious education of the children.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

However, the Church does permit such marriages in certain cases. She grants a dispensation. What are these cases?—

When Catholics present themselves before the pastor for marriage, they must answer honestly all his questions in this regard. He will ask all that is necessary, and will easily discover whether there are any reasons, which prohibit marriage. These circumstances or facts, which prohibit or prevent marriage according to the laws of the Church, are called *"impediments."*

4. Let us think again of our story. Donna Martha did not give her consent at once to Don Ferdinand. She first asked for time to consider. Then she begged God to enlighten her mind by earnest prayer and by having Masses offered for her intention, so that she might be able to make the right choice. She also asked her dear parents to give her advice or counsel, so that she might not make a mistake. Then Don

Ferdinand and Donna Martha received the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Communion. Now they were ready to make a promise of marriage, or a betrothal, or engagement. That is the proper, the Christian way to act. **Christians should prepare for a holy and happy marriage by receiving the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist; by begging God to grant them a pure intention and to direct their choice; and by seeking the advice of their parents and the blessing of their pastors.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

5. Married people must be united by a great and a strong love for each other, otherwise their marriage will be unhappy; and an unhappy marriage is a sort of Hell on earth. People who intend to get married must learn to know each other, in order to find out whether they really are suited to each other, whether they are virtuous and may hope for a happy married life. This period during which the future husband and wife learn to know each other better and to try each other, is called "*courtship.*" It is a preparation for marriage. And just as seminarians prepare themselves for the Holy Priesthood by prayer and recollection and self-denial, so also people who intend to get married must spend their time before marriage. Company-keeping, therefore, is allowed when there is an intention of getting married, and a prospect of marriage. During this period much prudence is necessary. Therefore, all persons, who wish to prepare for marriage ought to consult their confessor before they give their hearts to any one. That is absolutely necessary for their future happiness. Whoever begins company keeping too early, frequently falls into great sins, and spoils his future wedded happiness. God will not bless those who prepare for marriage by leading a life of sin. Without God's blessing it is impossible to have a really happy marriage. Our Catechism says: **Many marriages prove unhappy because they are entered upon hastily and without the proper motives.**

(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)

Write on the blackboard:

1. Laws concerning the Sacrament of Matrimony—the Church; Laws concerning the civil effects of Matrimony—the State.
2. Church forbids:
   a) marriage with persons who are not Catholics;
   b) marriage with persons who have no religion at all.

Such marriages lead to indifferences, loss of Faith, neglect of religious education of children. (3).

4. Preparation for marriage—Sacraments, prayer, advice of parents and confessor.

Synthesis. What you have learned today is very important for your future happiness. Who has the right to make laws in regard to the Sacrament of Matrimony?—Why?—Can the State also make laws in regard to marriage?—What does the Church think of marriage between Catholics and those who are not of the Catholic Faith, or who have no religion at all?—Tell me some impediments to marriage.—What must Catholics do, in order to prepare worthily for marriage?—Is courtship allowed?—How should that time be spent?—Why are so many marriages unhappy?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. You know from the Bible History how young Tobias had to make a journey. The Angel Raphael accompanied him under the appearance of a young man. When they entered into a certain town, the Angel said: "A man lives here, Raguel by name. He is a relative and has a daughter, and he will give you his daughter to wife." Then they entered into the house of Raguel. He received them kindly. When Tobias revealed himself, Raguel rejoiced greatly and prepared a feast. But Tobias said: "I will neither eat

nor drink, until thou grantest my wish and givest me Sara, thy daughter, to wife." The Angel also said to Raguel: "Fear not and give her to him to wife; for he is a God-fearing youth." Then Raguel consented and blessed Tobias and his daughter. Now Tobias and Sara were engaged. *They persevered together for three days in prayer,* and only then did they marry. There you see how bridegroom and bride ought to prepare for marriage.

2. Now one word more about *mixed marriages.*— A certain clerk who was working for a millionaire, had gained the good will of her employer by her good behaviour. This man hit upon the sensible thought, that he does not indeed need another's money, but he does need a good daughter-in-law in the family. Therefore he made her the offer of marrying his oldest son to her. But the girl replied, that she had the highest respect and regard for the son, but she could not accept the proposal, because she is a Catholic. Later on the younger son also offered her his hand, saying: "You may practise your religion just as before!" However, the girl gave him the same answer, that she could not accept because she is a Catholic; her Catholic conscience forbids that. She preferred to remain a simple clerk to becoming the wife of a millionaire in a mixed marriage. What an example for all Catholics! Beware of mixed marriages!

LESSON LIV.

The Seven Sacraments.

(Review Lesson)

Catechetical Unit:

1) How many Sacraments are there? L. XIII, Q. 137.

2) Can we receive the Sacraments more than once? L. XIII, Q. 148.

3) Why can we not receive Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders more than once? L. XIII, Q. 149.

4) What is the character which these Sacraments imprint in the soul? L. XIII, Q. 150.

5) Does this character remain in the soul even after death? L. XIII, Q. 151.

6) What is a Sacrament? L. XIII, Q. 136 .

7) Whence have the Sacraments the power of giving grace? L. XIII, Q. 138.

8) Which are the Sacraments that give sanctifying grace? L. XIII, Q. 140.

9) Why are Baptism and Penance called Sacraments of the dead? L. XIII, Q. 141.

10) Which are the Sacraments that increase sanctifying grace in our soul? L. XIII, Q. 142.

11) Why are Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony called Sacraments of the living? L. XIII, Q. 143.

12) What grace do the Sacraments give? L. XIII, Q. 139.

13) Besides sanctifying grace do the Sacraments give any other grace? L. XIII, Q. 145.

15) Do the Sacraments always give grace? L. XIII, Q. 147.

16) What sin does he commit who receives the Sacraments of the living in mortal sin? L. XIII, Q. 144.

(N. B. Some of these questions and answers have already been fully explained in the preceding instructions, while all have been touched upon, at least in a general way. The catechist will now explain more in detail whatever did not receive special treatment. These answers only are to be memorized by the pupils for the next class.)

Preparation. Dear children, before we begin today's lesson let us first review the questions and answers of

the last class. *(Question the pupils briefly on the foregoing lesson.)*—Christ gave us seven Sacraments, in order that we might become holy and some day be happy in Heaven. Which are the seven Sacraments?—*There are seven Sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony. (Repeat together.)* When did Christ institute Baptism?—When did He institute Penance?— Holy Eucharist? — Holy Orders? — What graces does he receive, who is baptized?—he that is confirmed?—the penitent?—he that receives Holy Communion?—a person who is anointed, when in danger of death?—the priest?—married people?—Now tell me briefly: What is Baptism?—Confirmation?—Baptism is the Sacrament of regeneration, or rebirth. Confirmation is the Sacrament of strength. Penance is the Sacrament of the forgiveness of sins. The Holy Eucharist is the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ. Extreme Unction is the Sacrament for those who are dangerously ill. Holy Orders is the Sacrament, through which a person is made a priest. Matrimony is that Sacrament, through which two persons become married people. Can we receive the Sacraments more than once?—*We can receive the Sacraments more than once, except Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders. (Repeat together.)* Why can we not receive Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders more than once?—*We cannot receive Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders more than once because they imprint a character in the soul. (Repeat together.)* What is the character which these Sacraments imprint in the soul?—*The character which these Sacraments imprint in the soul is a spiritual mark which remains forever. (Repeat together.)* — Does this character remain in the soul even after death?—*This character remains in the soul even after death; for the honor and glory of those who are saved; for the shame and punishment of those who are lost. (Repeat together.)*—

Aim. Now some one might ask: *But why did Christ institute just seven Sacraments?* Are they not too many? Do we need them all? This question I am going to answer today.

Presentation. When a child comes into the world, it is still a heathen child. But it ought to become a Christian child and a child of God. For that reason we have the Sacrament of Baptism. Thereby the child receives a new life, the life of grace. Thus it is born again, regenerated, for eternal life, for Heaven. But just as in a garden weeds grow in the midst of the flowers, so also in the garden of the heart of the child very soon weeds begin to grow, namely, sin. In a garden one must again and again tear up the weeds. So, too, we must continually pull out the weeds of sin. That happens in the Sacrament of Penance. But after Confession we ought to remain in grace and we ought to grow continually in the life of grace. How is that possible? Jesus Christ Himself comes into our heart; He nourishes us with His Sacred Body and Blood. Then we are branches on the true vine, Christ. Just as the branches receive sap and life-giving power from the vine, so we from Christ in the Holy Eucharist.

When the child gradually gets bigger, many dangers approach: dangers from the wicked world, dangers from the wicked enemy, dangers from evil inclinations, or concupiscence. Then it is a question of being strong and of not wavering and falling. Therefore the Holy Ghost comes into the child's heart in Holy Confirmation and makes it strong in the Faith and for a Christian life of Faith—the Christian is made a soldier of Christ. The struggle never ceases till death. But in the hour of death the decisive battle takes place. Once more the wicked enemy strains every nerve in order to seduce and to destroy the soul. But thanks be to God! provision has been made, that the dying person might not succumb in the struggle: the priest strengthens him by means of Extreme Unction.

But why have we in addition Holy Orders? Without priests no Sacraments, no Church any more. But these may not cease; therefore we have the Sacrament of Holy Orders. And why Matrimony? Father and mother need many graces, in order that they may faithfully persevere with each other and educate their children to become children of God. For this they receive rich graces in the Holy Sacrament of Matrimony.

Do you see how well Jesus has provided for us? As often as we need grace, we receive grace in a Holy Sacrament. If then a Christian is lost, he must say: "My fault, my exceedingly great fault!"

Explanation. 1. Now let us look at the Sacraments again a little more closely. What is there that is the same in all the Sacraments?—In each Sacrament something takes place visibly, outwardly; that one can see and hear—the outward sign. In each Sacrament something takes place interiorily, in the soul; that one cannot see and hear—the soul receives invisible grace. Every Sacrament is instituted by Jesus Christ. — **A Sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Jesus Christ to give grace.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)* In Holy Baptism the Baptismal water together with the words of Baptism is the outward sign. The person, who has been baptized, is cleansed and sanctified interiorly: that is the invisible grace. Just as the child's body is washed by the pouring of water, so also the child's soul is washed clean from the filth of sin. Baptism is from Christ. Show me these three parts in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist; in Extreme Unction.—

2. But tell me: whence have the Sacraments their mysterious power?—Once I saw a picture of the crucified Christ. Seven streams of the Sacred Blood were flowing from the wound in His Sacred Side. *(Show the children such a picture.)* There is a beautiful and

deep meaning in that picture. The streams of Blood signify the seven Sacraments. All the Sacraments have been instituted by Jesus Christ and in each Sacrament there is the power of Christ's Blood. By His death on the cross Jesus earned, merited, for us all graces.—**The Sacraments have the power of giving grace from the merits of Jesus Christ.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. But now let us look a little more closely at the invisible grace, which the Sacraments give. With each Sacrament we receive sanctifying grace; but not from all in the same way. We receive the first sanctifying grace in Baptism; the sanctifying grace, which we have lost, we receive again through Penance. You see, then: **The Sacraments, that give sanctifying grace, are Baptism and Penance.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

What is it that makes the soul alive for God and for Heaven?—It is sanctifying grace. A person is alive, when he has sanctifying grace in his soul, when he is in the state of grace. Everyone, therefore, that has not sanctifying grace in his soul, is dead for God and for Heaven. Mortal sin is the death of the soul. Now why is Baptism received?—It is meant for persons, who have never had the life of grace in their souls; therefore it is meant to take away sin, which is the death of the soul, and to give grace, which is the life of the soul. Why is Penance received?—It is meant in the first place for persons, who have lost the life of the soul, grace, by committing mortal sin after Baptism. Therefore it takes away sin, which is the death of the soul, and gives grace, which is the life of the soul. Our Catechism says: **Baptism and Penance are called Sacraments of the dead.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* When we receive the Sacraments of the dead, we have not yet the life of grace in our soul or we do not have to have grace in the soul; but we receive these Sacraments, in order to get grace, the life of the soul. 4. **Baptism and Penance are called Sac-**

raments of the dead, because they take away sin, which is the death of the soul, and give grace, which is the life of the soul. *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* But what if a penitent has only venial sins? In that case Penance does not give grace, but it increases, gives more grace.

5. All the other Sacraments give more, increase, sanctifying grace and thus increase our glory in Heaven. **The Sacraments that increase sanctifying grace in our soul are: Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony; and they are called sacraments of the living.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* Therefore a Christian may receive these Sacraments only if he already possesses sanctifying grace in his soul. 6. **Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony are called Sacraments of the living, because those who receive them worthily are already living the life of grace.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* There is only one among these Sacraments, which can also give sanctifying grace in case of necessity—Extreme Unction. You have already heard: Extreme Unction forgives those sins, which the sick person is no longer able to confess. 7. Now you see: **Some of the Sacraments give sanctifying grace, and others increase it in our souls.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

8. Each Sacrament also gives a *special grace of help or assistance,* but each one a different grace; for each Sacrament has a different end or purpose. Why have we Baptism?—Baptism makes from a child of man a child of God; but it also gives grace, in order that the baptized person may always be able to remain a child of God. Why is Confirmation?—Confirmation makes a Christian to be a soldier of Christ. At the same time it gives a special grace, in order that the person confirmed may have strength to believe and to live the life of Faith. Penance gives a special grace for a pious Christian life; it helps the penitent hence-

forth to avoid sin and dangers of sin. Holy Communion nourishes in us the life of grace. Extreme Unction in a special way gives courage and strength to the dying for the death struggle. Holy Orders gives grace, in order that the person ordained may always remain a good priest. Matrimony gives special assistance or help, in order that married people may faithfully fulfil the duties of their state in life. You see, then, how each Sacrament has a special end or purpose; each one has a different task to perform and each one gives special grace to enable us to perform that task.—**Besides sanctifying grace the Sacraments give another grace, called sacramental.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* 9. **Sacramental grace is a special help which God gives to attain the end for which He instituted each sacrament.** *(Repeat together; use the board.)*

10. Great indeed are the holy Sacraments. But not to all do they bring blessings; to very many the Sacraments bring destruction. How is that possible?—It all depends upon whether we receive them worthily or not. What must one do before Confession? before Holy Communion?—before Confirmation?—For each Sacrament we must prepare ourselves properly; then the Sacraments will give grace without the least doubt. **The Sacraments always give grace, if we receive them in the right dispositions.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* 11. A person, therefore, who would dare to receive the Sacraments without the proper dispositions, unworthily, would be guilty of a very great sin —a sacrilege. That is especially true of Holy Communion, for in Holy Communion we receive not only grace, but the Author of grace, Jesus Christ Himself. To receive Baptism and Penance worthily we do not, indeed, need to be in sanctifying grace, but we do have to prepare ourselves properly for them. For the Sacraments of the living we must be in the state of grace, as we already learned. **He who receives the Sacraments of the living in mortal sin, commits a sacrilege,**

which is a great sin, because it is an abuse of a sacred thing. *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)* You see, then, a great deal depends also upon ourselves.

Write on the blackboard:

1. Every Sacrament
(a) outward sign;
(b) invisible grace;
(c) instituted by Christ.

2. Sacraments
(a) *give* or *increase sanctifying* grace.
(b) give special *(sacramental)* grace.

3. Sacraments
—to be received worthily—with right dispositions (otherwise a sacrilege).

4. Power of Sacraments — through the merits of Christ.

Synthesis. Now you will understand why Christ has instituted seven Sacraments. We need them all and cannot dispense with any. All the Sacraments are signs of God's grace. What is required for a Sacrament?—What kind of grace do the Sacraments give?—Which Sacraments give grace?—Which ones increase grace?—What do you call the Sacraments, which give grace?—Why?—What do you call the Sacraments, which increase grace?—Why?—How must we receive the Sacraments?—What kind of a sin does he commit, who receives a Sacrament without the proper dispositions?—Whence have the Sacraments their power?—Which Sacraments can we receive only once?—Why?—How long does this character remain in the soul?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. We Catholics have seven Sacraments. But not all Christians are as fortunate as we. You know that Luther rejected five of the Sacraments. Protestants have only two Sacraments—Baptism and the Lord's Supper. But even their Lord's Supper is not true Holy Communion; they do not receive Christ's Body and Blood, but rather only bread and wine, because they have no priests. How poorly off they are! But how rich are the children of the Catholic Church! From the cradle to the grave we receive so many rich graces from God. Each Sacrament is like a seed, which is placed in the soul and brings forth fruit. At death is the harvest-time; then God will gather the fruits for Heaven.

2. But alas! there are Catholic Christians, who do not want to have anything more to do with the Sacraments; they no longer go to Confession and no longer want to receive Holy Communion. How ungrateful! He that does not want to have anything to do with the Sacraments, does not want to have anything to do with the grace of Christ. But what will happen to such people on the great harvest-day? Would you like some day to be so unfortunate? If not, be grateful for the holy Sacraments; they are gifts of God. But Christ gave them to us for our salvation. Always receive the Sacraments worthily. It is better not to receive the Sacraments at all than to receive them badly!

VIII.
THE SACRAMENTALS

LESSON LV.

(I) Sacramentals.

(The Sign of the Cross)

Catechetical Unit:

1) How do you make the sign of the Cross? L. XXVII, Q. 295.
2) How does the sign of the Cross express the mystry of the Incarnation and death of our Lord? L. XXVII, Q. 299.
3) How does the sign of the Cross express the mystery of the Unity and Trinity of God? L. XXVII, Q. 298.
4) How is the sign of the Cross a profession of faith in the chief mysteries of our religion? L. XXVII, Q. 297.
5) Why do we make the sign of the Cross? L. XXVII, Q. 296.
6) What is a sacramental? L. XXVII, Q. 292.
7) Which is the chief sacramental used in the Church? L. XXVII, Q. 294.
8) What is the difference between the Sacraments and the sacramentals? L. XXVII, Q. 293.

Preparation. Dear children, there are seven little fountains of grace in our holy Church, the seven Sacraments. In them there flows, as it were, the Blood of Christ, in order to purify and to sanctify our souls. We have them all from Christ. Let us first review this teaching. *(Question the pupils briefly on the foregoing lesson.)*

The Sacraments are the signs of Christ's grace. But we Christians have also other signs of grace. They are not indeed as holy as the Sacraments, but they are, nevertheless, precious.—What do you do when you

enter the church? You take Holy Water and make the sign of the Cross. Whoever does that devoutly, receives grace from God. How do we make the sign of the Cross?—**We make the sign of the Cross by putting the right hand to the forehead, then on the breast, and then to the left and right shoulder, saying: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.** *(Repeat together; correct any defects which the pupils may be guilty of.)*—In the church the priest gives you the blessing at Holy Mass; sometimes also the blessing, or benediction, is given with the Blessed Sacrament. Holy Water, the sign of the Cross, the blessing of the priest, benediction of the Blessed Sacrament—all these are Christian signs of grace. But there are also many others. They are called sacramentals.

Aim. *Today we are going to learn about these little signs of grace or sacramentals, but especially about the sign of the Cross.* In the next class we shall learn about Holy Water and some of the other sacramentals. —The sign of the Cross has a special power. I shall first tell you a story of how the sign of the Cross helped to bring victory.

Presentation. Among the Roman Emperors there was one, who was called Constantine. His mother, St. Helena, was a Christian. He most probably obtained a better idea of Christianity from this pious woman. Constantine, while still a pagan, marched at the head of his army against his enemy, Maxentius, who was much stronger and who contended with him for the throne. Then Constantine with his entire army saw on the heavens a shining Cross with the inscription: "In this sign thou shalt conquer." After this vision Constantine had a standard (or flag) made according to this sign and ordered that standard to be carried at the head of the troops and thus gained a complete victory over his enemy. In triumph he entered into Rome and became henceforth a zealous pro-

tector of the Christian religion. He permitted the free exercise of the Christian religion, built splendid churches and received Holy Baptism. His example moved thousands of heathens to be converted to the religion of Christ, and soon the temples of the idols were empty. After a short while the Christian religion became the dominant religion of the Roman Empire. His mother, St. Helena, faithfully supported her son; she built the church of the Holy Cross on Mount Calvary, and on Mount Olivet, she built the church of the Ascension. She it was also, who discovered the holy Cross again, an event which the Catholic Church celebrates on the feast of the Invention of the holy Cross. *(Show the pupils a large picture of this event from the life of Constantine.)*

(Cf. Dr. A. Weber's: Ausgeführte Katechesen über das dritte Hauptstück für das 5. Schuljahr, vol. I, p. 105 Jos. Kösel, Kempton u. München, 1904.)

Explanation. 1. The Emperor Constantine owed his victory to the sign of the holy Cross. At first the battle was doubtful. But when the standard with the sign of the Cross was carried at the head of the troops, the soldiers of Constantine were animated with new courage, and God so disposed things that they won the battle. God Himself willed, that the Cross should be attached to the standard of battle. He caused *a shining Cross to appear in the heavens* with the inscription: "In this sign thou shalt conquer!" Thereby God made known His will, that the soldiers were to rely upon this sign and trusting in the same to win the battle. By the victory of the Emperor it became evident to all, that in the sign of the Cross there must be a special power.

2. *The power of the sign of the Cross* does not, of course, consist in the few lines, out of which it is made. Neither did that power consist in the standards, which the soldiers carried on before, but rather in what the Cross signifies. It reminds us of the death of Christ. Christ on the Cross conquered the wicked enemy,

redeemed the world and reconciled the world with God. Ever since it is a sign of honor; before that it was a sign of shame. Therefore the power of the Cross is in the sufferings and death of Christ. The memory of the death of Christ continues to work in the Cross, and therefore it is not surprising that Constantine conquered. Christ has won a much greater victory on the Cross than Constantine won. He conquered the wicked enemy and freed the world, and from this victory of Christ all power goes forth; the victory of Constantine was only a faint reflection or picture of this victory of Christ. Our Catechism says: **The sign of the Cross expresses the mystery of the Incarnation by reminding us that the Son of God, having become man, suffered death on the cross.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)* Think of that each time you make the sign of the Cross.

3. Ever since the first battle was won in the sign of the Cross, *veneration of the sign of the Cross* advanced rapidly. The Emperor himself built splendid churches and placed the Cross on the altars. His mother, St. Helena, had a search made for the true Cross and rejoiced, when it was discovered. She built the church of the holy Cross and the church of the Ascension. The Cross reminded the Christians of their redemption; in the Cross they placed their confidence, and their confidence was often rewarded. Gradually the custom came into vogue of making the sign of the Cross on the forehead, mouth and breast. *(Illustrate! and have the pupils imitate carefully.)* When the priest reads Holy Mass, he gives the blessing in the form of the Cross. Surely, there is no more beautiful and appropriate sign with which to confer a blessing. In the Old Testament a blessing was given by the priest extending both hands over the people and calling down God's blessing. In the New Testament we have the sign of the Cross. The priest makes the sign of the holy Cross with his right hand.

4. But there is another deep meaning in the sign of the Cross. When making the sign of the Cross we say the words: "In the name (not names) of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Thereby we openly profess that we believe in one God (in the name)—the doctrine of the Unity of God. Then we also pronounce the names of the three adorable Persons in God—Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Thus we profess our belief in the mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity—three Divine Persons in one God. Our Catechism says: **The words, In the name, express the Unity of God; the words that follow, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, express the mystery of the Trinity.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

5. You see, therefore, that every time we make the sign of the Cross we openly acknowledge that we believe in one God in three Divine Persons and also that the Son of God became a man and suffered and died for us. Let us say the entire answer together: **The sign of the Cross is a profession in the chief mysteries of our religion because it expresses the mysteries of the Unity and Trinity of God and of the Incarnation and death of our Lord.** *(Use the blackboard.)*

6. The sign of the Cross is the badge of the Christian; it distinguishes him from the unbeliever. It is an open profession of those two very important, yes, the chief mysteries of our Holy Christian Faith. That is the reason why we make the sign of the Cross. **We make the sign of the Cross to show that we are Christians and to profess our belief in the chief mysteries of our religion.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

7. From all this you can clearly understand that the Cross is something holy and sacred. It is set apart or blessed by the Church to stir up within us good thoughts and to increase our devotion. Surely God is pleased with us, when He sees us thinking of the Blessed Trinity and of Jesus, Who suffered and died

for us. These pious thoughts and emotions take away our venial sins, provided, of course, that we are truly pious and devout, when we make the sign of the Cross. Therefore the sign of the Cross is a sacramental. **A sacramental is something set apart or blessed by the Church to excite good thoughts and to increase devotion, and through these movements of the heart to remit venial sin.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

8. **The chief sacramental used in the Church is the sign of the cross.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

9. The sign of the Cross is a sacramental and gives us grace. It is very much like a Sacrament. It is an outward sign; it gives us grace. And yet, there is a great difference between a sacramental and a Sacrament. Who instituted the Sacrament?—*Jesus Christ* Himself instituted the Sacraments; no man could do that, not even the Church can do it. But the *Church* has instituted the sacramentals. You see, therefore, that sacramentals are only *like* the Sacraments; hence they are called the sacramentals. Every time we receive the Sacraments worthily, we receive God's grace. The *Sacraments* give grace *of themselves,* provided we place no obstacle in the way, — if we receive them piously and properly. But the sacramentals do not give grace of themselves. When we make use of a sacramental piously, we are moved to pious thoughts and affections. God is pleased with these pious thoughts and affections of our hearts. Because of them He gives us grace. Therefore *sacramentals* do not give grace of themselves like the Sacraments, but only *because of our pious thoughts and affections.* That is another great difference between a Sacrament and a sacramental. Let us say the answer as our Catechism has it: **The difference between the Sacraments and the Sacramentals is: 1st, The Sacraments were instituted by Jesus Christ and the sacramentals were instituted by the Church; 2nd, The Sacraments give grace of themselves**

when we place no obstacle in the way; the sacramentals excite in us pious dispositions, by means of which we may obtain grace. *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

The Sign of the Cross:

1. expresses the mystery of the Incarnation, sufferings and death of Christ;
2. expresses the mystery of the Unity and Trinity of God;
3. shows we are Christians; expresses belief in chief mysteries of our religion.
4. Sacramental—something set apart by Church—to excite pious dispositions—remits venial sins.
5. Sign of Cross—chief sacramental used by Church.
6. Sacramentals—like Sacraments, but not instituted by Christ—from Church—give grace through pious dispositions, which they excite.

Synthesis. Let us now repeat what you have learned today about the sign of the Cross. How do you make the sign of the Cross?—In what other way can the sign of the Cross be made?—Has the sign of the Cross any power?—Give me an instance to prove that.—Of what does the sign of the Cross remind you?—Of what other mystery?—How does the sign of the Cross express the mystery of the Unity and Trinity of God?—Why do you make the sign of the Cross?—What is a sacramental?—Which is the chief sacramental used in the Church?—How do the sacramentals resemble the Sacraments?—How do they differ from them?—Is the sign of the Cross the only sacramental?—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. The sign of the Cross is a short summary of the whole Catholic Faith. By it the Cath-

olic lets men know that he professes the religion of the crucified Saviour. To Jews and Turks the Cross is an object of hatred and contempt; Protestants, generally, pay no honor to the holy Cross, although there are some, of course, who have learned to show honor to it from the children of the Catholic Church. The sign of the Cross is thus the peculiar property of Catholics the world over. It is a custom so ancient that it is generally believed to have been introduced by the Apostles. The Catholic Church repeats the sign of the Cross over and over again in Holy Mass, in all the Sacraments, in all blessings, and consecrations; the Cross is placed on all our churches, over all our altars, on banners, on sacred vestments, and over the graves of the departed. Churches are built in the form of a Cross.

2. The sign of the Cross is no empty ceremony, but is of itself a blessing, and a prayer for a blessing from God. The sign of the Cross chases away the devil and his temptations; as the dog fears the whip with which he has been beaten, so the evil one dreads the sign of the Cross by which he has been vanquished, for it reminds him of the holy Cross by which he was conquered on Calvary. Once there was a stag which bore between its antlers a tablet on which were written in golden letters the words: "I belong to the Emperor, hurt me not!" No huntsman ventured to shoot this stag. So whenever we make the sign of the Cross, we bear the inscription: "I belong to Jesus Christ!", and this protects us from our enemy, the devil. St. John Damascene says: "The sign of the Cross is a seal, at the sight of which the destroying angel passes on, and does us no harm." The early Christians made a continual use of the sign of the Cross, as Tertullian says: "At the beginning and during the performance of all that we do, when we go in and out of the house, when we dress ourselves, and when we lie down to rest, in fact in everything, we mark ourselves on the forehead with the sign of the Cross." Each time we make the

sign of the Cross with contrite hearts, we gain an Indulgence of fifty days.

3. The sign of the Cross is not a Sacrament, but it is like a Sacrament—a sacramental. It was not instituted by Christ, but by the Church. It does not give us grace of itself, but it excites in us pious thoughts and affections, and through these dispositions of soul God takes away our venial sins and gives us grace. Every Christian ought to possess a Cross for himself. An Indulgence is attached to a Cross, that has been specially blessed by the priest. Have you a Cross in your bedroom? In the hour of your death a Cross will be placed in your hands, and the sight of the crucified Saviour will be your consolation and hope in that last dread hour. Then you need the Cross in a special way, so that the prayers of Christ and of the Church may be helpful to your soul. Take care, then, to possess a crucifix! Even now it will remind you of death!

4. Let us all make the sign of the Cross now devoutly and reverently, so that we may gain the Indulgence for devoutly using this sacramental.

LESSON LVI.

(II) Sacramentals.

(Holy Water, etc.)

Catechetical Unit:

1) What other sacramental is in very frequent use? L. XXVI, Q. 300.
2) What is Holy Water? L. XXVII, Q. 301.
3) How should we use Holy Water? (Deharbe)
4) Are there any other sacramentals besides the sign of the Cross and Holy Water? L. XXVII, Q. 302.
5) What is a sacramental? L. XXVII, Q. 302.

Preparation. Dear children, St. John, Apostle and Evangelist, was called the beloved disciple of the Lord. Because he preached the doctrine of the Divinity of Christ fearlessly, he was hated especially by the unbelieving Jews. They plotted against his life. On a certain occasion, as the story goes, they gave him a cup that contained a poisonous drink. But the Saint was accustomed before eating or drinking anything, as the legend tells us, to make the sign of the Cross over the food and drink. He did that on this particular occasion. And behold! the cup broke and a serpent came forth, showing that the cup contained poison. The sign of the Cross saved the life of this great Saint. The sign of the Cross has great power. We saw that in the last class. Let us review this teaching. *(Question the pupils briefly on the foregoing lesson.)* Whoever makes the sign of the Cross devoutly receives grace from the Holy Ghost. It is a sacramental. But there are many other sacramentals in use in the Church. Our Catechism says: **Another sacramental in very frequent use is Holy Water.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard; see the diagram below just above the synthesis.)* You all have taken Holy Water frequently; each time you did that devoutly the Holy Ghost gave you His grace. Before the parochial Mass on Sundays the priest sprinkles the people with Holy Water, which he has blessed in the sacristy before the Mass.

Aim. Today I am going to describe for you *the blessing of Holy Water.*—Twice each year there is a solemn blessing of Holy Water in the Church, namely, on Holy Saturday and on the Saturday before Pentecost. But each Sunday also there is a simple blessing of Holy Water before the parochial Mass. How does this blessing take place?

Presentation. The priest stands before a vessel containing pure water; next to this vessel there is a plate of salt. The priest first blesses the salt, then

the water. He makes the sign of the Cross with his right hand three times over the water, reciting in the meanwhile certain prayers "in the name of God the Father almighty, in the name of Jesus Christ, and in the power of the Holy Ghost." Then he continues: "O God! listen graciously to our prayers, and infuse into this water the power of Thy benediction. Give to it the power of driving away devils and curing diseases, that whatever in the houses or the places of the faithful shall have been sprinkled with this water, may be freed from all uncleanness and delivered from all guile. Let no pestilential spirit reside there, no infectious air; let all snares of the hidden enemy be removed. And if there should be anything adverse to the safety or repose of the indwellers, may it be put entirely to flight by the sprinkling of this water, that the welfare which we seek, by the invocation of Thy Holy Name, may be defended from all assaults: through our Lord Jesus Christ," etc.

After this solemn prayer the priest takes the blessed salt and mingles the salt with the water, saying the words: "May this mingling of salt and water be made, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." "Let us pray! Trembling and suppliant we beseech Thee, O Lord, that wherever this water is sprinkled it may drive away the wicked spirits and the Holy Spirit may help us: through our Lord Jesus Christ." Thereupon the priest standing at the foot of the high altar intones the Asperges: "Sprinkle me, O Lord, with hysop and I shall be purified; wash me and I shall be made whiter than the snow!" While this hymn is being chanted by the choir the priest goes through the church and sprinkles the faithful with the blessed water. In the country he also, in certain places, goes into the cemetery and sprinkles the graves of the deceased, in order that they also may have this Christian alms.

Explanation. 1. Each Sunday the priest blesses water and sprinkles the people with it. While blessing

the water the priest speaks the beautiful and powerful prayer of benediction. Let us look at it once more and ask: For what does the Church pray? "Give to this water the power of driving away devils and of curing diseases." Here the Church prays for protection against the devil and for the welfare of the body. "Grant that whatever in the houses or the places of the faithful shall have been sprinkled with this water, may be freed from all uncleanness and delivered from all guile." Here the Church prays, that God may turn away from us His judgments and punishments, and that the Almighty may "let no pestilential spirit reside there, no infectious air." Then the Church prays again for protection against the wicked enemy: "Let all snares of the hidden enemy be removed." Finally the Church prays once more for peace and blessing: "If there be anything adverse to the safety or repose of the indwellers, may it be put entirely to flight by the sprinkling of this water, that the welfare, which we seek, may be defended from all assaults." You see, then, that this water has great power, if we use it rightly. Now you understand what Holy Water is: **Holy Water is water blessed by the priest with solemn prayer to beg God's blessing on those who use it, and protection from the powers of darkness.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

2. The people take the water, which the priest has blessed, to their homes. Why do they do that?—A pious Christian also takes Holy Water every morning and night; also when he enters and leaves the house. That is a good Christian custom. Therefore in every Christian home there hangs a vase for Holy Water near the door. Have you one at home? Is there Holy Water in it? See to it, that it is never empty. In the church, too, near the door you see a Holy Water vase. Upon entering and leaving the church we take Holy Water and make the sign of the Cross. That, too, is an old Christian custom. *A pious Christian sprinkles himself with Holy Water not only when he enters or*

leaves the church, but also in his house, when rising and going to bed, when going out and returning, and on many other occasions. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)

But you ought not to take Holy Water thoughtlessly, otherwise it will not help at all. You ought also to put in a petition. When the priest sprinkles Holy Water, he prays: "Sprinkle me, O Lord, with hysop, and I shall be *cleansed.*" The Holy Water ought to remind you of Christ's Blood. Through the Blood of Christ we were cleansed from sin. Therefore you might pray, when taking Holy Water: "Blood of Christ, make me clean!" Therefore *a pious Christian when taking Holy Water, at the same time begs God, that, through the Blood of Jesus Christ, he may be more and more purified, and be protected in all dangers of soul and body. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

3. God, the Lord, is unspeakably holy. As the Bible tells us, the Seraphim stand with veiled faces before the throne of God, for they are not worthy to look upon His face and cry out continually: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of armies!" Therefore whatever is destined for God's service may no longer serve the world, but must be specially *consecrated* and dedicated to His service. We have just seen that in regard to Holy Water. Such water may not be used for worldly purposes, for drinking, washing, cooking, etc. If it becomes harmful or useless for the service of God or the pious use of the faithful, it must be destroyed.

But Holy Water is not the only thing, which the Church consecrates, or sets apart, for the service of God and the pious use of the faithful. The Church consecrates many other things. To perform the divine services *persons* are necessary, priests. You remember from our lesson on Holy Orders, by what beautiful ceremonies students for the Priesthood are consecrated to God's service by the four minor orders and the subdiaconate. These consecrations are sacramentals just as much as Holy Water. Then again for the ser-

vice of God certain *things* are consecrated, or set apart: churches, altars, bells, sacred vessels and vestments, candles, crucifixes, etc. In certain consecrations, which are especially solemn, the Church uses sacred oils. They, too, are sacramentals. Finally for the pious use of the faithful the Church consecrates and blesses crosses, rosaries, medals, images (pictures and statues) of Christ, of the Blessed Virgin and of the Saints, ashes, palms, etc. All these blessed things are sacramentals. Our Catechism says: **Besides the sign of the Cross and Holy Water, there are many other sacramentals, such as blessed candles, ashes, palms, crucifixes, images of the Blessed Virgin and of the Saints, rosaries, and scapulars.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

In the Bible it is related of Jesus, that "having called together His twelve disciples He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of infirmities" (Matt. x, 1). The Church continues to do this very same thing. She gives to her priests the power of casting out *(exorcising)* evil spirits, so that they cannot hurt us. You have already heard of that in today's lesson concerning the blessing of Holy Water. Recall also the ceremonies of Baptism.—These exorcisms are also sacramentals.

Finally the Church also *blesses;* she calls down God's blessing upon persons and things: the blessing, which the priest gives with the Blessed Sacrament, the blessing spoken over the sick, the blessing of the throats (on the feast of St. Balse), the blessing of corpses, the blessing of the fields, of fruits, etc. All these blessings are sacramentals.

4. Now you can easily understand what we mean by a sacramental. Whatever the Church sets apart, or blesses, for the service of God or for the pious use of the faithful is a sacramental—the sign of the Cross, Holy Water, blessed candles, ashes, palms, rosaries, scapulars, churches, oil, salt, etc. When we use them properly, we are moved to pious thoughts and feelings.

God is then pleased with us and takes away our venial sins and gives us many other blessings. Then also the Church consecrates, or dedicates, or blesses persons or things; she also exorcises evil spirits. All these ceremonies are also sacramentals. They raise our thoughts to God; they move us to be pious and devout. God is pleased with these devout movements of our hearts and therefore gives us many blessings—**A sacramental is anything set apart or blessed by the Church, to excite good thoughts and to increase devotion, and through these movements of the heart to remit venial sins.** *(Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

5. What is the difference between a Sacrament and a sacramental?—Let us consider Holy Water. To what Sacrament is Holy Water like most of all?—To Baptism. Baptism is a visible sign, so is Holy Water. Baptism gives invisible grace, so does Holy Water. But how does Baptism give grace?—It gives us grace of itself, for the Sacraments contain grace and always give grace, provided we do not prevent grace from entering our soul by not being properly disposed to receive it. But the sacramentals, Holy Water for instance, do not give grace of themselves. They move us to pious and devout thoughts, and because of these pious dispositions God gives us grace. Finally Christ Himself instituted Baptism and all the Sacraments; but the Church instituted Holy Water and the other sacramentals. Therefore you see, that the sacramentals are only *like* the Sacraments. They differ from the Sacraments in two ways. Our Catechism says, as you heard in the last lesson: 1st, *The Sacraments were instituted by Jesus Christ and the sacramentals were instituted by the Church; 2nd, The Sacraments give grace of themselves when we place no obstacles in the way; the sacramentals excite in us pious dispositions, by means of which we may obtain grace. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

6. But a doubter might ask here: Has the Church really power to institute sacramentals? Just recall

what you learned about Holy Orders. — While the Bishop anoints the hands of the priest, he says: "Whatever they bless, shall be blessed, whatever they consecrate, shall be consecrated." Do you see? The priest can bless and consecrate. He may also exorcise the evil spirits; he receives special consecration for that purpose. Christ gave to His Apostles, and therefore to His Church, the power to bless, to consecrate and to exorcise.—Therefore *the Church instituted the sacramentals by virtue of the power she received from Christ to bless, to consecrate, and to exorcise. (Repeat together; use the blackboard.)*

Write on the blackboard:

1. Holy water—sacramental—water blessed by the priest—to beg God's blessing—to protect from evil.
2. Holy Water — at home, in church — Blood of Christ.
3. Other sacramentals—blessed candles, ashes, tc.
4. Sacramental—anything blessed, or set apart by Church—consecrations, exorcisms, blessings—to excite devotion and thereby to remit venial sins.
5. Sacramentals—like the Sacraments, but not from Christ—from the Church (power to bless, etc.)—do not give grace of themselves.

Synthesis. Let us now review what you ought to remember about sacramentals, especially Holy Water. When is Holy Water blessed?—What is Holy Water?—When ought you to use Holy Water?—For what does the Church pray, when she blesses Holy Water?—What are sacramentals?—Which is the chief sacramental after the sign of the Cross?—How are sacramentals different from Sacraments?—Has the Church the power to institute sacramentals?—Name some other sacramentals besides Holy Water and the sign

of the cross.—*(Have the pupils read the answers from the Catechism and blackboard. Assign the lesson for the next class.)*

Application. 1. The Sacraments have been instituted by Christ and have a greater power than the sacramentals. Nevertheless, the sacramentals are very helpful to us. A Sacrament demands a good preparation and therefore cannot be received always. But we can make use of Holy Water at any time, without a special preparation, even when in sin. The only thing required is, that we take it with the proper disposition, that is, with devotion and contrition and confidence in God's mercy.

2. You ought to keep the Holy Water vases at home in good condition. They are very much exposed to dust. Therefore they ought to be cleaned from time to time. In summer the Holy Water evaporates quickly. Therefore Holy Water ought to be poured into the vase at the required times. Holy Water can also help the Poor Souls. Whenever you visit a grave sprinkle it with Holy Water. Thereby the Poor Souls have a share in the prayers of the Church.

3. The sacramentals are little sacraments, as it were. We ought to use them zealously. But generally they will work only, if we use them with childlike confidence and trust. Have you a blessed medal? a rosary? a crucifix for the dying?

4. Just listen to one more example of the power of sacramentals! A certain person, who experienced it himself, tells us: "Years ago I became dangerously ill. The end was close at hand. For three hours I lay like one dead. The wicked enemy tortured me so severely, that I could not pray any more. All that I saw excited me anew to sin. Therefore I closed my eyes. And I succeeded, at least from time to time, in praying with confidence. As I looked up during one of those moments, I noticed, how some one was just sprinkling me with Holy Water. The Holy Water

drove away the enemy and gave me confidence and strength. Then I asked them to sprinkle me oftener with the blessed water!" Do you see? Such is the power of Holy Water. And the same is true of the other sacramentals.

5. Another sacramental I should like to recommend to you is the holy rosary. Rosaries are also blessed and receive Indulgences. One might indeed pray without a rosary, but when one holds a blessed rosary in one's hands and tells the Hail Marys, one does not pray alone, but the whole Church prays together with such a person. The Church blesses the rosary, and when a person prays the rosary he shares in the prayers and the blessings of the Church.

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